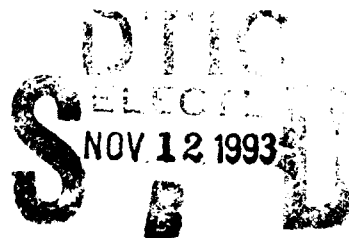


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NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
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THESIS

BRAZIL'S NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY:
PROSPECTS FOR
THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

by

Kenneth S. Lundgren

June 1993

Thesis Advisor:

Scott D. Tollefson

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**BRAZIL'S NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY:
PROSPECTS FOR
THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

by

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Captain, United States Army
B.S., Brigham Young University, 1983

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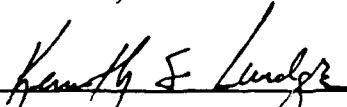
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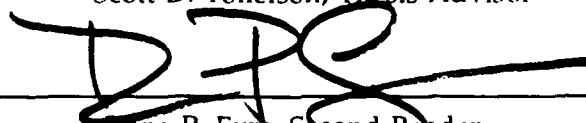
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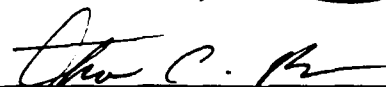
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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyzes the factors that have contributed to the contemporary of Brazil's national defense strategy. It addresses the role of geopolitics, the impact of regional economic integration through Mercosur, renewed nationalism, and the uncertain political realities facing Brazil in the 1990s. Further sections review the historical role of the Brazilian armed forces, the fading importance of the Superior War College, the new civil-military relationships, and the concept of strategic planning in Brazil. Lastly, it examines the dilemma facing Brazil's armed forces in attempting to move from an internal to external security orientation. It discusses the military mission to develop and integrate the Amazon, and argues that this nation-building mission is in its final phase. In assessing the implications of all these factors, the study concludes that Brazil is restructuring its military strategy to demonstrate sovereignty in the Amazon while aspiring to occupy the role of regional hegemon.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Brazil's National Defense Strategy: Prospects for the Twenty-first Century

CPT Kenneth S. Lundgren
June 1993

This thesis argues that the military institutions of Brazil are seeking to regain influence forfeited during the transition to democratic rule. Most scholars explain this phenomenon in institutional terms - that the military are seeking to increase their civil-military prerogatives. This study, however, counters with the hypothesis that the Brazilian military's search for increased prerogatives is more a reflection of the military's national strategy and the desire of the armed forces to retain their position as South America's leading regional power, in conjunction with the Brazilian government's planned economic integration through Mercosur (which integrates the economies of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay).

The dilemma for the Brazilian military is that the very concept of regional integration dilutes their national strategy by eliminating borders and seeking a parity in force structures between Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay. Many authors argue that the military's region-wide withdrawal from government has freed civilian leaders to pursue regional integration regardless of past rivalries. Nevertheless, Brazil's military strategy continues to be extremely nationalistic, focusing on autonomy and constantly posturing to strengthen the military's control over the country's geopolitical activity.

This is in direct contrast to Mercosur, which continues to stumble and falter with its implementation timetable, allowing the Brazilian military opportunities to further strengthen their sphere-of-influence through development of the Amazon Basin.

The thesis is organized with an introduction and three parts. The introduction discusses the purpose of the study, the major research question, scope and organization of the study, and the significance of the research. Part one examines the rise of western geopolitical thought and its impact on Brazilian scholars and the military institutions. It addresses the significant role of geopolitics, the impact of regional economic integration through Mercosur, renewed nationalism, and the uncertain political realities facing Brazil in the 1990s. Part two traces the historical role played by the military in Brazil, emphasizing their new agenda in civil-military relations, and the military's search for a national defense strategy. Part three compares the fundamentals of geopolitics and the national defense strategy against the military leadership's desire for regional hegemony. It discusses the military mission to develop and integrate the Amazon, and argues that the military is in its final phase of this mission. It identifies Brazil's military aspirations, and concludes that Brazil is restructuring its military strategy to assert sovereignty in the Amazon, and to occupy the position of regional hegemon.

I. INTRODUCTION

This thesis argues that the military institutions of Brazil are seeking to regain influence forfeited during the transition to democratic rule. Most scholars explain this phenomenon in institutional terms, that is that the military is seeking to increase its civil-military prerogatives.¹ This study, however, counters with the hypothesis that the Brazilian military's search for increased prerogatives is more a reflection of the military's national strategy² and the desire of the armed forces to retain their position as South America's leading regional power.

The military's national strategy needs to be analyzed in conjunction with the Brazilian government's planned economic integration through Mercosur (which integrates the economies of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay). The dilemma for the military lies in that the very concept of Mercosur dilutes

¹see Alfred Stepan, Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1988), [hereinafter "Stepan (88)"], 93; for a Latin American perspective see Jorge Zaverucha, "Degree of Military Political Autonomy During the Spanish, Argentine and Brazilian Transitions", a paper presented at the XVII Latin American Studies Association Conference, 24-27 September 1992, Los Angeles, California.

²see Ray S. Cline, World Power Trends and U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1980's, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1980), 143. This study defines Strategy as, "...the part of the political decision making process that conceptualizes and establishes goals and objectives designed to protect and enhance national interests in the international environment".

their national strategy by eliminating borders and seeking a parity in force structures between Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay. Frequently, Mercosur is prematurely compared to the European Coal and Steel Community Organization of the 1950's, implying that, like the Western European countries, once the Southern Cone countries are stripped of their artificial geopolitical ideologies, a new age of regional cooperation will spontaneously emerge. Authors are often quick to point out the military's region-wide withdrawal from government, and hastily credit this phenomenon with freeing civilian leaders to pursue regional integration regardless of past rivalries. Nevertheless, Brazil's military strategy continues to be extremely nationalistic, focusing on autonomy and constantly posturing to strengthen its control over the country's geopolitical activity. This is in direct contrast to Mercosur, which continues to stumble and falter with its implementation timetable, allowing the Brazilian military opportunities to further strengthen their sphere-of-influence through development of the Amazon Basin.³

At the theoretical level the primary analytical tool used will be that of geopolitics- its bearing on Brazil's external

³see "Brazil and Partners Launch MERCOSUR", Latin American Regional Reports: Brazil Report, 2 May 1991, RB-91-05, 8; also see "Argentina's Cavallo says extension of Mercosur's Timetable Inevitable", Latin American Regional Reports: Southern Cone Report, 24 December 1992, RS-92-12, 1.

competition for South American hegemony,⁴ and its impact on the development patterns in the Amazon. This study will attempt to analyze Brazil's national military strategy. It will assess Brazil's search for regional hegemony as the next logical step beyond economic integration and Mercosur.

This study begins by reviewing historical European, primarily German, and Brazilian geopolitical thought as a basis for the analysis of contemporary national defense policies. A cursory review of Brazil's history from the 1900's to the present is examined for evidence of past geopolitical theories and their relationship to national goals and aspirations. A review of past relations with the neighboring countries of Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia is also included. To limit the scope of the study, however, the research remains focused on Brazilian geopolitical thought, and the policies that appear to be designed to influence Brazil's bid for regional hegemony. The research results are analyzed to determine implications for contemporary Brazilian national defense strategy and military relations among the Southern Cone countries.⁵

⁴This study defines hegemony as the act of extending political and economic influence beyond national borders, and in asserting regional leadership. Hegemony is frequently mistaken for imperialism, which is territorial conquest.

⁵For the purpose of this study the Southern Cone is defined to be Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, and Paraguay.

A. ORGANIZATION OF STUDY

The thesis is organized with an introduction and three parts. The introduction discusses the purpose of the study, the major research question, scope and organization of the study, and the significance of the research. Part one examines the rise of western geopolitical thought and its impact on Brazilian scholars and the military institutions. It reviews geopolitical theory in Brazil with sections on historical background, geopolitical thought and the perceptions of neighboring Spanish-American states. It also covers the current internal debate between nationalism and internationalism, and the uncertain political realities of 1993. Part two traces the past role played by the military in Brazil, analyzing their new agenda in civil-military relations and their search for a national defense strategy. Part three compares the fundamentals of geopolitics and the national defense strategy against the military leadership's desire for regional hegemony. It identifies Brazil's military aspirations, reaches a conclusion on the national defense strategy for Brazil, its implications for U.S. foreign policy, and its strategic direction into the twenty-first century.

B. METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

This thesis is based solely on unclassified sources. The author conducted a research trip to Washington, D.C. in February 1993. This trip included interviews with military

and civilian action officers in the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Defense Intelligence Agency, The Army Staff, National War College, and the Department of State. The research includes materials from the following sources: Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Joint Publication Research Service, Executive News Service, Latin American Regional Reports, and various journals, periodicals, and independent reports.

The research attempts to identify geopolitical concepts and measure their influence on government. The research provides insight into the way Brazil might express its political aspirations in future contexts. In Brazil, geopolitics has generally focused on internal integration, but scholars are now suggesting that geopolitics might prove useful in analyzing the foreign policy actions of Brazil and other Southern Cone countries. The results of this study may contribute to the understanding of how geopolitical theory influences Brazil's national defense strategy, its regional relations, and its drive to occupy the dominant leadership position in the Southern Cone.

II. THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF GEOPOLITICS

The term geopolitics, while not often used in the writings of North American scholars, has assumed a crucial niche in contemporary South American political thought. The basic definition emphasizes the relationship between geography and politics. However, the popular identification of geopolitics as a World War II Nazi Germany doctrine has contributed to its restricted use as First World political theory. As a result, most North American political scientists view geopolitics as obsolete, and rarely use the concept.⁶

The reasons for the abandonment, or neglect, of geopolitical analysis by North American writers are obscure at best. As already noted, geopolitics had been associated with the expansionist policies of Nazi Germany. Additionally, the arrival of the nuclear age with its emphasis on international ballistic missiles, has reduced the perceived influence of geography on strategic thinking. Finally, as theoretical approaches have changed over time, it has come to be perceived as obsolete in academic circles, simply an outdated paradigm.

⁶As used in this thesis "geopolitics" refers to the dynamic aspects of those combined geographic and political factors that influence the options and strategies of a nation's foreign policies.

This explains why, when geopolitics is used in contemporary works, it is usually in terms of a historical reference.⁷

Yet, the most obvious translation of geopolitical theory into government policy in the post-war, Cold War era is the United States' containment policy. Thus, the terms used to describe national strategy, defense policy and national security policy in the United States seem to encompass geopolitical terms without directly referring to them.⁸

A. GEOPOLITICS IN THE SOUTHERN CONE

Geopolitics and geopolitical theory are very apparent in South America's Southern Cone countries, where several countries have well-developed institutions of geopolitical thought. In fact, much of the analysis conducted by local scholars on foreign policy, international relations or internal development is conducted using geopolitical concepts and terms.⁹ Geopolitical writing is not limited to military publications, but can also be found in periodicals,

⁷see James E. Dougherty and Robert H. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., Contending Theories of International Relations, (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1987), 33-46.

⁸see George F. Kennan, "X", "The Sources of Soviet Conduct", Foreign Affairs, July 1944, 575. In a later work Kennan was even more explicit, Realities of American Foreign Policy, (New York: N.W. Norton Company, 1969), 65.

⁹see Jack Child, Geopolitics and Conflict in the Southern Cone: Quarrels Among Neighbors, (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1985), [hereinafter "Child (85)"], 3.

newspapers, and books. An example can be found in Chile, where former president and current military Commander General Augusto Pinochet wrote a book on geopolitics while a professor at the Army's War Academy.¹⁰

The reasons why geopolitical thought and commentary appears to be flourishing in the Southern Cone can be attributed to a few significant factors. First, South America remains a continent of extreme geographic features and climatic conditions. While this still presents a challenge to man, modern technology and its machinery are now being used to exploit resources located in what used to be uninhabited and often unreachable buffer zones between the Southern Cone states. This exploitation, particularly in frontier border areas, is exacerbating old disputes and conflicts as well as creating new ones.¹¹

Second, rapidly growing and poorly distributed populations are now a significant factor. Some countries have vast areas of unused or under-used land and the population explosion has resulted in colonization, often through uncontrolled emigration, regardless of political borders. This more or less peaceful fluctuation feeds the states' fear of loss of sovereignty. Additionally, a growing number of mineral

¹⁰see Augusto Ugarte Pinochet, Geopolitica, 3d ed, (Santiago, Chile: Editorial Ardvess Bello, 1977).

¹¹see United States Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, International Boundary Study, Brazil-Venezuela Boundary, no. 175, 17 July 1985.

resources are in increasing demand on the world market, as is the product of the narco-traffickers.¹²

Third, the Southern Cone still provides an area for the application of classical geopolitical principles because of limited air power and non-existent nuclear power. As Lewis Tambs points out:

The aerial capabilities of the nations of that continent are slight and their nuclear power non-existent; consequently the geopolitical analysis of the relationship between international political power and geographic setting which was developed prior to World War II is still applicable.¹³

Finally, the continued persistence of geopolitics in the Southern Cone is tied to the region's history of authoritarian-military regimes. While geopolitical theory is not a monopoly of the military, it has been the high-level military schools that have nurtured geopolitical thought and doctrine, educating civilian elites in the discipline.

¹²see Jack Child, "Geopolitical Thinking", in Louis W. Goodman, Johanna S.R. Mendelson, and Juan Rial, (eds.), The Military and Democracy: The Future of Civil-Military Relations in Latin America, (Lexington, Massachusetts: Lexington Books, 1990), [hereinafter "Goodman, Mendelson, and Rial (90)"], 144.

¹³see Lewis A. Tambs, "Geopolitical Factors in Latin America" in Norman A. Bailey, (ed.), Latin America: Politics, Economics, and Hemisphere Security. (New York: Praeger, 1965), 33; also see a later work by Tambs, "The Changing Geopolitical Balance of South America," Journal of Social and Political Studies, [hereinafter "Tambs (79)"], no. 4, Spring 1979, 17.

B. THE EUROPEAN CONTRIBUTION

Most of the geopolitical concepts used in the Southern Cone are directly traceable to European schools of thought originating in the late nineteenth century. They can be grouped and categorized in various ways. There are land power theories, sea power theories, organic state theories, determinist theories and possibilist theories, all of which have had some influence on the Southern Cone's geopolitical thought. However, imperialistic Nazi Germany seems to hold the dominant position in South American geopolitical thinking. During the 1990 Brazilian-United States Army staff talks, the Brazilian delegation presented a briefing that credited the German army as its primary external patron during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Thus, German geopolitical theory has been the driving ideology used by the military in Brazil and continues to be expressed in their military doctrine.

C. THE GERMAN INFLUENCE

The German school of geopolitical thought seems to have coined the concept of political geography. This modern theory starts with the German political geographer, Friedrich Ratzel (1844-1904). Ratzel was influenced by Darwin's theory of evolution, and subsequently pioneered the idea of the state as a living organism. He set forth a series of laws defining the expansionist growth of states and the importance of space and

sea. Ratzel's concepts viewed the earth geographically, emphasizing the distribution of life on the earth's surface and ultimately defining space as a political force that must be mastered. As a geographer, he embraced the notion that political decisions were shaped by the geopolitical potential of the state. In sum, his seven laws are: (1) the space of states grows with culture, it is only through culture that new territories are brought under control; (2) the growth of states follows other manifestations of the growth of people which must precede the growth of the state, such manifestations include commercial production and missionary activity; (3) the growth of states proceeds by the addition of smaller units, but annexation is not enough - new territory must be integrated into the state; (4) the frontier is the periphery organ of the state, it is where growth occurs and is critical for security of the state. It suffers with all changes of the state organism, implying that a correction of the political boundary is necessary when it does not coincide with the cultural boundary; (5) in their growth, states strive for the absorption of politically valuable sections such as coastal regions, river basins, and regions rich in natural resources; (6) the first ideas of territorial growth comes from without; and (7) the general tendency toward territorial

annexation and amalgamation spreads from state to state with increasing intensity.¹⁴

After World War I, the shock and bitterness arising from Germany's defeat, which involved the loss of both continental and colonial territory, deeply affected German geopolitical thinking. A young army officer, Karl Haushofer, appears to have been the motivating force and acknowledged leader in German geopolitical theorizing. After retiring from active service, Haushofer became a professor of Geography and Military science at the University of Munich in 1919, and shortly thereafter founded the "Institute fur Geopolitik". Some of his concepts concerning political science were that geopolitical analysis enables one to make political predictions, and that politicians should always use geopolitics in establishing their political objectives. He stressed that geopolitics was a science, to be studied with a view towards the present and future, not the past. According to Haushofer, without a solid geopolitical understanding a state's foreign policy would forever remain theory and never become reality.¹⁵

¹⁴see Roger E. Kasperson and Julian V. Minghi, (eds.), The Structures of Political Geography, (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1969), 17; the complete text of Ratzel's The Laws of the Spatial Growth of States, translated by Ronald Bolin.

¹⁵see Andreas Dorpalen, The World of General Haushofer: Geopolitics in Action, (New York: Kennikat Press, 1966), [hereinafter "Dorpalen (66)"], 16; also see Derwent Whittlesey, Chapter 16, "Haushofer: The Geopoliticians", in Edward M. Earle, (ed.), Makers of Modern Strategy: Military thought from Machiavelli

Haushofer was concerned with the mastery of space and the subsequent distribution of populations on the surface of the earth. He discussed boundaries, the location of capital cities, the problems of urbanization, the "drive to the sea", and oceanism versus continentalism orientation. The following points characterize his thoughts regarding space: Haushofer argued that space governs man's history, yet few nations realize the importance of space planning or adopt their policies to spatial needs. Therefore the nations of the world fall into two groups, ones which have more space than they can master and others which have less space than needed to adequately feed their population. Haushofer cited the decline of the Spanish and Portuguese empires as examples of the inability to master space, and forecasted the disintegration of the British Empire for the same reason. He argued that the lack of space mastery was one of the legacies modern South American states received from their colonial European patrons, and that this lack was responsible for the territorial losses of Bolivia, the War of the Pacific, and the continuing boundary disputes between South American nations. Haushofer stressed that space was not only an economic and political aspect but also the greatest military factor of a state.¹⁶

to Hitler, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1941), 394.

¹⁶see Dorpalen (42), 90.

In retrospect, some of Haushofer's concepts seem to be as valid today as when he first wrote about them sixty years ago. He clearly pointed out the problems of the "haves" and "have nots" which still persists today, and accurately described the problems of inadequate space mastery as the cause for boundary disputes. Haushofer's thinking on border problems reflects the organismic school of thought. He claimed, as did Ratzel, that border regions have a life of their own and that the principles of geopolitik could solve any border issue. Therefore, a state's boundaries are malleable rather than rigid, and arbitrary borders drawn in disregard of racial, geopolitical, or economic needs will continue to be the primary cause of rebellion. He argued that a central location of a capital strengthened a nation's internal structure, while a peripheral position weakened it. He concluded that abnormal urbanization indicates decay, because it results in a decrease of population throughout the countryside, thereby causing a loss of space mastery. Culture, he observed, is the best indicator of expansion. It advances slowly but establishes itself permanently.¹⁷

Regardless of what influence Haushofer may have had on the politics of the Third Reich, the German school of geopolitics is identified with him and may have died with him when he committed suicide in 1946. Nevertheless, his ideas and

¹⁷see Karl Haushofer, "The Call of the Sea", reprinted in Dorpalen (42), 129.

theories can be traced to contemporary South American geopolitical thought, and many of the problems noted in Haushofer's writings remain unresolved. The Southern Cone countries are still attempting to master their space and deal with increasing urbanization. Border problems are still causing conflicts while population explosions create new ones.

III. GEOPOLITICS IN BRAZIL¹⁸

Brazil is unique (at least in relation to its neighboring Spanish-American countries) because of its size, distinctive racial integration, its colonial heritage, and development pattern. Brazil is by far the largest country in Latin America and one of the largest in the world. The country has a large and rapidly increasing population that is expected to surpass one hundred and eighty million by the year 2000. But perhaps the most obvious of these differences is its Portuguese, or Luso-Brazilian heritage, as opposed to the Spanish colonial heritage. The old disputes between the Portuguese and Spanish Empires have persisted throughout history and flourish in isolated locations today. Part of Brazil's Portuguese heritage is its historic process of expansionism, which achieved its greatest gains during the colonial and early Republic periods.¹⁹

¹⁸see Riordan Roett and Scott D. Tollefson, "Brazil's Status as an Intermediate Power", Third World Affairs, 1986, 101; also see Riordan Roett, "Brazil Ascendant: International Relations and Geopolitics in the Late 20th Century", Journal of International Affairs, 29:2, 1975, 139; also see Riordan Roett, "The Changing Nature of Latin American International Relations: Geopolitical Realities", in Kolman H. Silvert, (ed.), The America's in a Changing World. (New York: The New York Times Book Company, 1975), 95.

¹⁹see Lewis A. Tambs, "Geopolitics of the Amazon", in Charles Wagley, (ed.), Man in the Amazon, (Gainesville Florida: The University Press of Florida, 1974), 42; also see, "Brazil: A Country Study", (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Press, 1983).

Today, Brazil, because of its history of expansion, its vast size and aggressive development, is often viewed as the greatest regional threat by its Spanish-speaking neighbors. Policies and actions designed for internal development of Brazil are viewed against this background of threat. Brazil's expansion across the Tordesillas Line to its present boundaries is comparable only to the United States' move westward and Russian's move into Asia. It is unmatched in South America and has provided the geographical base for a great nation, even a First World state.²⁰ Yet, fear of Brazilian expansion is still present in its neighboring countries and is a continuing theme in Latin American political commentary. Today, Brazil is accused of continuing its expansion through economic and cultural penetration, rather than strictly acquiring territorial gains as in the past. Thus, foreign policy formulation in Brazil is viewed as merely incidental to national goals, its actual policies revealed by actions, and not by public announcements.²¹

A. A HISTORY OF BRAZILIAN GEOPOLITICAL THOUGHT

In searching for solutions to the country's problems of security and development, Brazil has developed a considerable

²⁰see Child (85), 42.

²¹see Riordan Roett, Brazil: Politics in a Patrimonial Society, 4th ed., (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1992), 181; also see Ronald M. Schneider, Brazil: Foreign Policy of a Future World Power, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1976), XV.

body of geopolitical theory. These geopolitical concepts flourished under a series of military regimes between 1964-1985, and are being translated into government policy and action even today. There are two interesting phenomena concerning Brazilian geopolitical thought. First, much of the earlier geopolitical writings were far-reaching in scope, envisioning Brazil's "Manifest Destiny" in securing access to the Pacific and in achieving continental hegemony. The second and more recent geopolitical theorizing is basically internal and regional in scope. It is designed to care for the increasing population, to rejuvenate the national security posture, and to provide the economic and industrial base needed for Brazil's entry into the First World.²²

Brazil's geopolitical theories on internal development have resulted in a cloud of uneasy caution in its neighboring countries. For example, a road built by Brazil to facilitate colonization of underdeveloped areas is represented in the neighboring country's media as an invasion route, or a joint hydroelectric project is perceived as a bid for regional hegemony. This reaction is probably heightened by the fact that Brazil's pragmatic foreign policy has revealed itself in recent years in a series of bilateral agreements with neighboring countries. While there are mutual benefits in

²²see Child (85), 35; also see Marcia Marques, "Brazilian-Bolivian Highway Construction Project Detailed", Folha De Sao Paulo, (in Portuguese), 14 July 1988, D-1, as translated and reported in JPRS, LAM-88-029, 11 August 1988, 6.

these bilateral agreements, there are also avenues for cultural and political penetration by Brazil.²³

In addition to these formal bilateral agreements, another phenomenon disturbs Brazil's neighbors. Brazil's population growth in the South and Southeast has led to considerable emigration (colonization) into Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay, where Brazilians are buying cheap land in underdeveloped border areas and settling on the land as farmers. At the same time, Brazil's official policies are designed to channel people into colonizing the West and the Amazon basin. When coupled with recent encroachments in the border areas by the Brazilian military, this migration raises fears of more Brazilian expansion.²⁴

Brazilian actions and the perception of them as being geopolitical in nature only heightens alarm in Argentina, Brazil's traditional regional rival. Argentina, whose military experienced a sudden and dramatic removal from their leadership position following the 1982 Falklands/Malvinas war, are striving to regain lost prestige. Internal political divisions and problems surrounding economic development further contribute to Argentina's feeling of inferiority. As

²³see G. Pope Atkins, Latin America in the International Political System, 2d ed., (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1989), [hereinafter "Atkins (89)"], 77.

²⁴see Alfredo Da Mota Menezes, The Strossner Heritage: A History of Brazilian-Paraguayan Relation, 1955-1980. Ph.D. Dissertation, (Tulane University: University Microfilms International, 1988), [hereinafter "Menezes (84)"], 129.

a result, much of their contemporary geopolitical theorizing is devoted to the analysis of the Brazilian threat and to ways to counteract Brazilian influence.²⁵

When geopolitical theory arose in the Western world it was studied by Brazilian scholars and military men who adapted the principles to the needs of the country, based on clearly-outlined national goals that were agreed upon by the majority of elites and translated into policy. Some experts have argued that geopolitics in Brazil has become institutionalized, and is centered around three major themes: the defense of the country; the development of the nation to include industrialization and colonization of underpopulated/underdeveloped areas of the country; and the achievement of great power status by the year 2000.²⁶

B. PROFESSOR EVERARDO BACKHEUSER

Professor Backheuser was a colleague of Germany's Karl Haushofer. He published a number of articles in Brazilian and European periodicals, mustering academic support for his new geopolitical theories. In 1948, the Pontificia Universidade

²⁵see Leslie W. Hepple, "The Geopolitics of the Falklands/Malvinas and the South Atlantic: British and Argentine Perceptions, Misperceptions, and Rivalries", in Philip Kelly and Jack Child, (eds.) Geopolitics of the Southern Cone and Antarctica, (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1988), [hereinafter "Kelly and Child (88)"], 223.

²⁶see Philip Kelly, "Traditional Themes of Brazilian Geopolitics and the Future of Geopolitics in the Southern Cone", in Kelly and Child (88), 111.

Catolica (in Rio de Janeiro) created a chair of Geopolitics for him within the Law Department.²⁷ In his book, he points out that Brazil had three great geopolitical problems: the space of Brazil; the location of the capital; and the territorial division of the country. Backheuser believed that political space goes through three phases of evolution: the conquest of space; the defense of the conquered space; and the valuation of the space possessed. He also developed a theory for a country's frontiers. He believed that there was a spontaneous force within states to simplify and shorten boundaries until they formed a circle, the shape in which the greatest area is bounded by the least amount of border area. His theory included a geopolitical formula for defining the pressure quotient on a given border. A critical element of this formula was whether the frontier was "living or dead"; that is, either occupied, translucent, or contended. Under this concept, the nation exercising the greatest geopolitical pressure on the frontier would eventually gain territory. A simplification of his frontier hypothesis is that where two dead frontier zones adjoin there is little probability of friction and the frontier should be stable. Where two living zones meet there is a possibility of friction with a slight

²⁷see Cesar N. Caviedes, "The Emergence and Development of Geopolitical Doctrines in the Southern Cone Countries", in Kelly and Child (88), 22; also see Everardo Backheuser, Curso de Geopolitica Geral e do Brasil, (Rio de Janeiro: Biblioteca do 'Exército, 1952).

chance of dislocation of the actual boundary by the stronger nation, either militarily or diplomatically. However, where a living area meets a dead zone, there is a greater possibility of invasion of the state whose frontier is a dead zone, either peacefully, economically or militarily.²⁸

Backheuser called for the revitalization of the frontiers in order to preserve Brazil's national territory. He advocated the establishment of a comprehensive frontier policy that would provide for a productive population to cultivate the land, and establish an industrial nucleus that would ensure the adequate distribution of the population. Backheuser stated that the care and defense of the frontier was the responsibility of the Federal government and not of the separate states. He clearly defined it as the primary mission of the Brazilian Army, a task that was originally not well received by the military. However, his concepts are recognized as the founding literature in Brazil on geopolitics, and he is credited with initiating the tradition of geopolitics actually affecting government policy.²⁹ Backheuser was, however, only the first of a number of

²⁸see Jack Child, "Inter-State Conflict in Latin America in the 1980s," in Jennie K. Lincoln and Elizabeth G. Ferris (eds.), The Dynamics of Latin American Foreign Policies: Challenges for the 1980s, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984), [hereinafter "Lincoln and Ferris (84)"], 31; also see Howard T. Pittman, Geopolitics in the ABC Countries: A Comparison, Ph.D. Dissertation, (The American University, Washington D.C.: University Microfilms International, 1981), [hereinafter "Pittman (81)"], 330.

²⁹see Pittman (81), 339.

pioneers in Brazilian geopolitics. A few of the other important thinkers were Mario Travassos, Golbery do Couto e Silva, and Carlos de Meira Mattos, all of whom were professional military officers.

C. GENERAL MARIO TRAVASSOS

Mario Travassos argued that Brazil must develop both internally and externally on an East-West axis, instead of just along the Atlantic coastline. He called his theory the "Continental Projection of Brazil": it included the idea of two antagonistic geographic divisions of the South American continent, the Atlantic and the Pacific, with the Andes as the divider between them. On the Atlantic side, most pertinent to Brazil, there were two more major geographic features, the Amazon and the Plata river systems. Travassos recognized that one river was controlled by Brazil and the other controlled by Argentina, which further emphasized the geopolitical importance of Bolivia's plateau or Altiplano. He identified the Altiplano as Sir Halford Mackinders "Heartland" of South America;³⁰ it enjoyed access to both river systems as well as the mountain pass through the Andes to the Pacific coast beyond. He believed that the Southern Cone country that

³⁰see Daniel S. Papp, Contemporary International Relations: Frameworks For Understanding, 3d ed., (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1991), 10.

controlled this area would dominate Latin American politics.³¹

In order to achieve this domination, Travassos proposed a two-pronged East-West drive into the heartland. This would ultimately provide Bolivia access to the Atlantic and Brazil access to the Bolivian plateau and Pacific ports. One axis would be via the Amazon river system, and the other would be via a railroad that would connect Santa Cruz de La Sierra to Corumbá, forming a triangle and offering Brazil a direct trade route that would cut across the Argentine approach from the South via the Plata river system. This symbolic triangle also included a series of interconnecting road and river routes. This same geopolitical concept is being used today by the Brazilian government in its contemporary economic and political penetration of Bolivia. It is also why Brazil continues to support Bolivian attempts in regional conferences to regain access to the Pacific.³²

D. GENERAL GOLBERY DO COUTO E SILVA

The late General Golbery do Couto e Silva was one of the best known modern Brazilian geopolitical theorists. As an Army officer, he was the founder and first director of the

³¹see Bernardo Quagliutti de Bellis, "The La Plata Basin in the Geopolitics of the Southern Cone", in Kelly and Child (88), 130; also see Mario Travassos, Projeção Continental do Brasil, 4th ed., (Sao Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1947).

³²see Kelly and Child (88), 132.

National War College (ESG), where his ideas were very influential. In addition, he was a member of every military government and was able to translate his theories into action.³³ In November of 1966, General Golbery was sent to Paraguay, to close the rift between the two countries. His charge was to play down Brazil's military move into a contested border areas and propose the development of a joint hydroelectric project. These talks were the beginning of the Itaipu hydroelectric project, the world's largest power plant.³⁴

Golbery considered geopolitics the primary factor in the development of the state and in the formulation of national security policies. He argued that geopolitics could not be a substitute for national strategy, but could be translated into the aspirations of the national conscience and provide popular support for governmental programs. Golbery's work divided Brazil into a central nucleus, the Northeast, the South, the West Central peninsula and the island of Amazona.³⁵

General Golbery identified three goals: the defense of the frontier and need for development throughout the country; the integration of the West Central peninsula as a base for the

³³Brazil was under military rule from 1964 to 1985, during which time five army generals acted as successive presidents.

³⁴see Menezes (84), 59.

³⁵see Armin K. Ludwig, "Two Decades of Brazilian Geopolitical Initiatives and Military Growth", Air University Review, July-August 1986, 57.

movement in the Amazon and blocking Argentine imperialism; and the integration of the Amazon into the country. In Golbery's analysis, Brazil held the key both to control of the continent and of the South Atlantic, but to exercise this power the country had to be fully integrated and developed. To reach that point he proposed the following sequence of events: (1) in phase one, to link the Northeast and the South to the central nucleus to provide the economic base for Travassos's "continental projection"; (2) in phase two, to stimulate colonization to the Northwest in order to integrate the west central peninsula into Brazil; (3) in phase three, and starting from the established base in the west central under the guise of frontier outposts (defense points), to flood the Amazon basin with civilization in an East-West movement primarily along the river axis, descriptively coined as a fluvial strategy.³⁶

E. GENERAL CARLOS DE MEIRA MATTOS

General Carlos de Meira Mattos has succeeded General Golbery as Brazil's primary geopolitical theorist. Like Golbery, he was a successful military officer educated in the Escola Superior de Guerra (ESG - Superior War College) system. Unlike Golbery, however, he envisions the development of Brazil's power base as a foundation for world-class power as

³⁶see Pittman (81), 348; also see Golbery do Couto e Silva, Geopolítica do Brasil, (Rio de Janeiro: Jose Olympio, 1967).

well as regional hegemony. To accomplish these lofty goals he advocates the educating of elites, the development of geopolitical policies for energy and transportation programs, and the bilateral development of border areas with neighboring countries, which he called "poles". He seeks to expand on the earlier work of Travassos, noting that Brazil was a continental as well as a maritime country. Though a robust maritime infrastructure existed, internal land connections need to be built. Mattos' writings are possibilist in nature, stating that Brazil's geography offers the possibility of manifest destiny, but the people of Brazil must desire it above all else.³⁷

In assessing Brazil's world power status, Mattos argues that Brazil possessed all the ingredients for great power status and could reach that goal by the year 2000. Its assets include a vast territory bordering on ten countries, the longest coastline in the South Atlantic and an abundance of natural resources. Mattos often ties his analysis to the theory of interior space integration, complete with a national road network and the development of nuclear power. He concedes that the drive for nuclear power will exacerbate

³⁷see Philip Kelly, "Geopolitical Themes in the Writings of General Carlos de Meira Mattos of Brazil", Journal of Latin American Studies, [hereinafter "Kelly (84)"], 16 November 1984, 453.

rivalries and past antagonisms, but believes these goals are necessary to becoming a great power.³⁸

In 1977, while stationed in Washington as Deputy Director for the Inter-American Defense College, Mattos turned in his writings from the geopolitical development of national power to the projection of power. He stated that the modernization of a society is a factor of power projection, and differentiated between development and modernization. Development is the end goal, while modernization is the means of reaching it.³⁹ A summary of his most prominent ideas are as follows: (1) Brazil is a great but vacant country, only Argentina has less population in relation to territory in South American; (2) Brazil has good maritime connections with other countries, but its continental lines of communications need to be improved through an aggressive road network to neighboring countries; (3) new natural resources are being discovered in the sea, Antarctica, and the Amazon which must be controlled and exploited by Brazil; (4) Brazil spends too little on national defense, with only a very small percentage of its population in the armed forces; and (5) Brazil has

³⁸see Kelly (84), 458.

³⁹see Atkins (89), 67.

great unity where national interests, projects, and geopolitical aspirations are involved.⁴⁰

General Mattos convincingly argues that for 200 years Brazil has tried to conquer the interior through a fluvial strategy, and has failed. This strategy began to change in the 1960's; the change called for conquering the Brazilian central plateau, establishing an interior capital, and then linking the interior with a road network that would free the country from the constraints of river and sea lines of communication. Mattos continues to extend his concepts into the entire Amazon region with an eye towards integrated development through the 1978 Amazon Pact.

The Amazon region includes two-fifths of the South American continent; of this 69 percent belongs to Brazil. Mattos further stipulates that there is a natural tie between the Amazon and Andean Pacts because five countries, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela are members of both. Brazil sees itself as the bridge country between these two pacts, in the role of the fulcrum actor. Some have called Brazil the champion of regional integration for its role in the Amazon Pact and ties with the Andean nations. Others see this as simply a tactical move to ensure Brazil's access to the resources of its neighbors as well as access to the

⁴⁰see Pittman (81), 364; also see Kelly (84), 453; also see Carlos de Meira Mattos, A Geopolítica e as Projeções do Poder, (Rio de Janeiro: Jose Olympio, 1977).

Pacific. Whether or not these actions represent a change in Brazilian geopolitical thought from nationalism to internationalism, an interesting side note is that in December 1992, President Itamar Franco announced his intention of inviting the seven Amazonian countries to join Brazil in forming a new regional organization, tentatively named "Merconorte". This new pact would further integrate Mercosur, the Andean Pact, the Group of Three⁴¹ and incorporate Guyana and Surinam into a continental cooperative.⁴²

F. CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY⁴³

The mainstream of Brazilian geopolitical theory has been intensely nationalistic despite more recent proposals for integration and joint development of the Amazon. The Brazilians prefer to work out issues on a bilateral basis, using Brazil as the fulcrum.⁴⁴ Contemporary Brazilian

⁴¹The "Group of Three" includes Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela; its primary charter is to promote trade and economic cooperation between members.

⁴²see "Franco To Propose Regional Trade Agreement", (in Portuguese), O Globo, 15 December 1992, 25, translated and reported in FBIS, LAT-92, 242, 16 December 1992, 32; also see "Merconorte", Latin American Weekly Reports, 7 January 1993, WR-93-01, 12.

⁴³see Jack Child, "The Status of South American Geopolitical Thinking," in G. Pope Atkins (ed.), South America into the 1990's: Evolving International Relationships in a New Era, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1990), 73.

⁴⁴see United States Army Sectional Message, R162036Z MAR 92, SUBJECT: BR-364 Paved as far as Acre, American Embassy Brasilia, Brazil, 1992, 1.

geopolitical theory is more devoted to the development of under-utilized internal territory and the defense of borders rather than economic integration with its neighbors through Mercosur or Merconorte. The greatest geopolitical results have been seen in the development of transportation and communications networks, and in the creation of "poles" to encourage the development and internal migration to previously unoccupied areas. Behind this development lies the greater goal of transforming Brazil into a world power, and in achieving regional hegemony. Thus, while the focus has changed from an initial emphasis on security to the current emphasis on development, this focus is again expected to reverse itself as higher levels of development are reached.⁴⁵

Brazilian geopolitical thinking is an important phenomenon but one that is little understood in strategic circles outside of the region. Although closely associated with the military regimes, geopolitical planning is not the exclusive property of the military, and as such has not disappeared with the advent of elected democratic governments. Geopolitical thinking is closely tied to the deep currents of nationalism and patriotism, and thus has the tendency to endure regardless of regime type.

There are no guarantees that future Brazilian governments will continue the geopolitical orientation of their

⁴⁵Ibid., 2.

predecessors. Over time, however, Brazilian leaders have followed geopolitical goals in spite of other ideological differences. If the past is any guide to the future, it is reasonable to expect this trend to continue. The pendulum is currently swinging towards increased nationalism under Itamar Franco's administration, converging with many of the more traditional aspects of the military's national defense strategy. The ideology and history of Brazilian geopolitics has permeated the media and school system, exposing much of the population to its tenets. As a result of this wide exposure and converging governmental forces, Brazil's national consciousness is bubbling with the spirit of a new bid for regional hegemony.⁴⁶

⁴⁶see David J. Myers (ed.), Regional Hegemons: Threat Perception and Strategic Response, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), [hereinafter "Myers (91)"], 225; also see John Child, "Inter-State Conflict in Latin America in the 1980's", in Lincoln and Ferris (84), 32.

IV. ON REALISM: RECASTING GEOPOLITICS IN BRAZIL⁴⁷

This portion of the thesis seeks to recast geopolitics as an analytical concept for the study of Brazil's defense strategy. It is no coincidence that geopolitics found its most avid supporters in Southern Cone countries. Though all Southern Cone countries continued to expand after independence and each lost some territory in disputes and settlements, Brazil is the undisputed champion in land acquisition.

It is this lasting and often bitter impression left by the pattern of expansion in the past century that has affected the Southern Cone most strongly. Brazil is perceived as expansionist and a threat to its neighbors, particularly when the dominating ideology is overtly nationalistic as in the new Itamar Franco administration. Thus, Brazil's search for autonomy and regional power are a result of the military's perception of threat which, though largely non-tangible, is focusing less on regional neighbors and more on international organizations.⁴⁸

⁴⁷see Gamaliel Perruci, "The Reshaping of Geopolitics in the Southern Cone", a paper presented at the XVII Latin American Studies Association Conference, 24-27 September 1992, in Los Angeles, California. The author has drawn heavily from this paper and is indebted to this previous work by Perruci.

⁴⁸see Alain Rouquie, The Military and the State in Latin America, trans. by Paul E. Sigmund, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), [hereinafter "Rouquie (87)"], 35; also see Christian Church World Council, Directive Brazil no. 4, (Geneva: July 1991), 1, which emphasizes the following guidance to their

Earlier sections focused entirely on a review of Brazilian geopolitical theories that have paved the way into the 1990's, helping to establish the current national defense strategy in Brazil. However, in the process of analyzing these geopolitical theories and then recasting them against a contemporary background, a different picture begins to emerge.

A. RECASTING BRAZILIAN GEOPOLITICS

Brazil's internal geopolitical structure today does not resemble that of an expanding United States trying to populate a relatively uncontested and habitable continent in the nineteenth century. Instead, Brazil resembles Australia or China, which must continually develop links between strong littoral regions and an empty, harsh interior. Thus, Karl Haushofer's theories on space occupy a significant position in the development of Brazil's geopolitical thought and contemporary policies in the development of the Amazon. In recasting Haushofer's concepts today, a single recurring aspect is exposed, revealing Brazil's greatest geopolitical threat: demographics. Brazil has a rapidly expanding population, normally considered a positive aspect in a country

Amazon missionaries - "The entire Amazon...is considered by us a patrimony of humanity. Ownership of this vast area by mentioned countries is merely circumstantial..."; also see "G-7 Support for Rain Forest Project: Critics say Industrialized Countries Eyeing Amazon Riches", Latin American Regional Reports-Brazil, 15 August 1991, RB-91-07, 4, Presidents Mikhail Gorbachev and Francois Mitterrand state that Brazil should be recognized as having only relative sovereignty over the Amazon.

with vast unused territory. When the population distribution is compared with Brazil's demographics, however, it is obvious that Brazil is chronically suffering from abnormal urbanization, one of Haushofer's signs of decay. In 1950, 36 percent of the population lived in cities; by 1990 over 75 percent were urbanized. Thus, the heavy stream of migration from the countryside to the cities has further exacerbated Brazil's inability to master its space.⁴⁹

The United Nations Population Fund issued an annual report in September 1992, categorizing Latin America as having one of the fastest growing populations in history, and as being hopelessly unprepared to deal with this population explosion. The most conservative estimates place the ranks of the poor in Latin America at 46 percent of the population, and the continued urbanization cannot support this population pattern (Brazil's projected growth rate from 1993 through 1995 is 2.7 percent per year).⁵⁰ On the one hand, populating Brazil's empty spaces is seen as a prerequisite for achieving great power status. On the other, Brazil fears that demands from the rapidly growing population will hinder the country's ability to assemble the capital necessary for industrial and technological modernization.

⁴⁹see Ronald M. Schneider, Order and Progress: A Political History of Brazil, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1991), 6.

⁵⁰see The United Nations, Trade and Development Report, 1992, the Secretariat of the United Nations conference on trade and development, (New York: United Nations Publications, 1992), 1211.

Everardo Backheuser discussed three geopolitical problems in Brazil. Two of the problems, the location of the capital and the territorial division of the country, have long since been accomplished. The mastery of Brazil's space remains unresolved, though the problem is being addressed through the government's programs in the Amazon. The Amazon is Brazil's last frontier area; the military will have completed its transition from a primarily internal security orientation to an external strategic perspective once the Amazon space has been successfully integrated. The military's own acceptance of its institutional mission in the Amazon is changing the border relations as described by Backheuser's frontier formula. In his terms, previous dead zones that have enjoyed relative stability are being modified into living zones. These new living zones converge upon neighboring states' dead zones, opening the way for cultural, economic, and military penetration. Military institutions are creating this change in the frontier buffer zones as part of their strategy for ensuring regional hegemony.

In May 1974, Brazil agreed to assist Bolivia in creating a "pole of development" in the Santa Cruz area, east of the Andes. The Santa Cruz-Corumbá railroad was completed in 1979, thereby creating Mario Travassos's symbolic triangle. On 16 February 1993, Presidents Itamar Franco and Jaime Paz Zamora (Bolivia) signed a 20-year contract for Bolivia to supply gas to Brazil, to begin in 1996. The project involves the

construction of a 2,233 kilometer pipeline. The project will only be implemented after the dissolution of a similar but much smaller volume contract between Argentina and Bolivia.⁵¹ Additionally, General Golbery's proposal for integration and development are in their final phase as the civilization of the Amazon Basin begins to materialize. In a paper presented to the U.S. Army War College on 1 April 1992, Brazilian Lieutenant Colonel Paulo Cesar Azevedo clearly indicated that Brazil was in the final stage of its grand "geopolitical maneuver", linking the "Amazon island" to the rest of Brazil.⁵²

This final phase of the military's strategy became obvious in the 1970's with the launching of the "Super-Brasil da Amazonas"⁵³ project in the Northwest territories, and subsequent launching of the "Calha Norte" program in the Amazon in 1985.⁵⁴ The Super-Brasil da Amazonas and Calha Norte projects grew from the geopolitical work associated with

⁵¹see "At Last, the Gas Deal with Bolivia", Latin American Weekly Report, 4 March 1993, WR-93-09, 98.

⁵²see Lieutenant Colonel Paulo Cesar Miranda de Azevedo, "Security of the Brazilian Amazon Area", Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1 April 1992, 33.

⁵³see Lea Tarbutton, "The Calha Norte Project: Brazil's Armed Forces Modernization", Armies of the World, [hereinafter "Tarbutton (91)"], United States Army Intelligence Agency and Threat Analysis Center, January-June 1991, ATC-RD-2600-072-90, 21.

⁵⁴see "Calha Norte", Brazilian Army Public Affairs Release, 1989; also see Lieutenant Mike Ryan, Calha Norte: Explaining Brazilian Army Presence in the Amazon, Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, June 1993.

the idea of space mastery. Both projects were designed to ensure the consolidation of the frontier areas and the eventual projection of Brazil's military into South America's core. According to Brazilian scholars, these projects were developed and executed for geopolitical reasons as Brazil began to recognize the concept of space as defined by Haushofer and Golbery. The completion of these projects conquers and defends the space of the frontier, and is another step towards Brazilian domination of South America's "Heartland", the Bolivian Altiplano plateau.

Finally, General Mattos' writings address Brazil's drive for nuclear power. Given the nation's reliance on foreign sources for more than two-thirds of its petroleum requirements, and the impact of the 1973 price increases, Brazil sought to reduce its vulnerability in this area. It intensified exploration for domestic supplies and even substituted alcohol, produced from sugar cane, for gasoline.⁵⁵ In the foreign arena Brazil first sought oil from other Latin American countries. Brazil then recognized that Third World oil producers wanted arms without political strings, and stimulated the development of a sophisticated arms industry.

⁵⁵see "Another Good Year in 1992: But Warnings about Risks in 1993", Latin American Weekly Report, 7 January 1993, WR-93-01, 7. The warning came from Mexico's energy minister stating that overall Latin American demand for crude oil would outstrip regional production, reinforcing the Middle Eastern connection (Iran) for Brazil.

Brazil's past armament customers include Libya and Iraq, with Iran being the newest Middle Eastern country expressing a desire to trade oil for arms. The Brazilians want back into the arms trade business, but at a higher level of technology than in the past.⁵⁶ Brazil's greatest obstacle is the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) countries, which continue to block Brazil's access to technology it claims it needs for peaceful development. The MTCR's rationale cites Brazil's continued refusal to sign the non-proliferation treaty, and its lack of an end-use policy. Brazil argues that the non-proliferation treaty discriminates against those countries that do not already possess nuclear weapons, and is therefore illegal and destined for failure.⁵⁷

Since 1975, Brazil has had a multibillion dollar agreement with West Germany to develop eight nuclear power plants in exchange for supplies of uranium. Brazil initially stated that its acquisition of nuclear technology would support its peaceful energy needs. However, the geopolitical realities of the region immediately led to an arms race for nuclear

⁵⁶see "Purchase of 200 MiG-29 Combat Planes Denied", (in Portuguese), O Estado De Sao Paulo, 7 December 1992, 14, translated and reported in FBIS, LAT-92, 235, 7 December 1992, 32; also see William Waack, "State Company Seeks Russian Missile Technology", O Estado De Sao Paulo, 6 December 1992, 14, translated and reported in FBIS, LAT-92, 235, 7 December 1992, 32.

⁵⁷see "Bid to Free Arms Trade From Curbs", Latin American Weekly Report, 28 January 1993, WR-93-04, 38; also see "New U.S. Missile Rules", Latin American Regional Report-Brazil, 9 July 1992, RB-92-06, 8.

technology with Argentina. Until recently, this was the primary security concern of the United States with the region. This Argentine-Brazilian rivalry grew to include the supplying of conventional weapons to the buffer states of Uruguay, Paraguay and Bolivia by both countries. Brazil's nuclear bomb program was officially halted by President Collor in 1991 but the subject continues to surface, leading many experts to speculate that the program simply went secret.⁵⁸

In related developments, Brazil continues to build a space launch vehicle with long-range missile potential, and has also resumed construction of the Angra II nuclear power plant after almost ten years. The decision to restart the program was made after Collor's departure, and with the appointment of the new director of the Secretariat for Strategic Planning (SAE), former Navy minister and a leader of Brazil's nuclear program, Admiral Mario Cesar Flores. The required equipment has already arrived in Brazil from Germany, and the power plant is expected to be operational by 1997. In a similar vein, the Navy continues to publicly announce its desire to christen a nuclear submarine by 2005.⁵⁹

⁵⁸see "Computer Thefts Said to Expose Nuclear Secrets" and "Parallel Program Revival", (in Portuguese), Isto É Senhor, 11 November 1992, 28-30, translated and reported in FBIS, LAT-92, 235, 7 December 1992, 34.

⁵⁹see Leonard S. Spector, "Repentant Nuclear Proliferants", Foreign Policy, no. 8, Fall 1992, 21; also see "Brazil; Industry & Trade, and Nuclear Power", Latin American Weekly Reports, 28 January 1993, WR-93-04, 38.

B. INTEGRATION AT A TIME OF RENEWED NATIONALISM

The end of the Cold War has accentuated the general anxiety among Southern Cone policy-makers concerning the emerging patterns of regional-level conflicts. On a global level, they are paying close attention to the way regional players are flexing their muscles and attempting to redraw the geopolitical landscape. This portion of study, therefore, focuses on the glaring contrasts between emerging cooperation and prevailing nationalism.⁶⁰

In Mercosur's nearly two years of existence, there has been a notable increase in trade between the pact's major trade partners. In Argentina this has translated into a huge bilateral trade deficit with Brazil, resulting in the loss by the Buenos Aires Stock Exchange of all the gains it made since late 1991. Argentine businessmen have been demanding that the government enact protectionist measures against Brazilian imports. They complain that Argentine companies are unable to compete with Brazil on equal terms, claiming that Brazilian companies receive governmental export incentives, subsidized financing, and benefits from their undervalued currency. In response to these complaints, Argentina's economy minister has simply stated that the advantages enjoyed by Brazil in bilateral trade agreements are only temporary and will

⁶⁰see "Zoroastro Document Scoring Government Excerpted: World Affairs and the Brazilian Situation", (in Portuguese), Gazeta Mercantil, 18 November 1992, 6, translated and reported in FBIS, LAT-92, 239, 11 December 1992, 27.

dissolve once Mercosur is operational, completely eliminating any current inequalities. Mercosur would then result in an Argentine victory as the country penetrated Brazil's economic barriers.⁶¹

While the movement toward economic integration has been accelerated by the demise of military governments and the end of the Cold War, the United States continues to play a vital role in shaping the hemispheric agenda. As the United States lessens its geopolitical pressure on Latin America, no longer seeking a close alignment against the Soviet Union, the Southern Cone countries are free to pursue their own policies. There is room for exaggeration and false hope concerning Mercosur's ability to foster solid cooperation in the Southern Cone. But if economics is replacing geopolitics as a tool of power, as some analysts have suggested, competition for economic spheres-of-influence will drive the integration agenda and the United States will continue to play a significant role in the region. At the end of World War II the United States called on the other American republics to form the inter-American system to contain the Soviet Union. The United States will again call on those same republics to unite against the rising economic tide of a Japan-led Asia and

⁶¹see "Mercosur Threatened by Argentina's Move to Curb Imports from Brazil", Latin American Regional Reports-Southern Cone Report, 19 November 1992, RS-92-09, 1; also see "Argentine Package will Disturb Relations", (in Portuguese), Folha De Sao Paulo, 30 November 1992, translated and reported in FBIS, LAT-92, 214, 4 November 1992, 41.

German-lead European Economic Community. The need for North American participation in any regional cooperative effort means that Mercosur could be overshadowed by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) agenda.⁶²

The prospect of the current cooperative spirit taking on an institutional form lies in part on Chile's decision not to join Mercosur, and in Argentine President Carlos Menem's acknowledgment that he does not rule out his country's future participation in NAFTA. The momentum of economic integration lies in NAFTA, not Mercosur.⁶³ The post-Cold War collapse of the inter-American security system has simply meant the reorientation of the strategic agenda toward trade bloc politics. The new civilian leaders have introduced a liberal economic agenda, reflecting the tradition of a weak civilian state amid powerful economic interests. In this sense, Mercosur is simply replicating the strategic tenets of the 1947 Rio Treaty, in which the American republics defined the hemispheric principles of collective security. Collective economic security is becoming a prominent factor in regional foreign policy making. It remains to be seen whether this effort will take an institutional form. It should not surprise anyone, however, if the United States takes a

⁶²see Keith Bradsher, "Free Trade Accord for North America is Expected Today", The New York Times, 12 August 1992, A1.

⁶³see "Argentina Interested in NAFTA Links but Not Pulling Out of Mercosur", Latin American Regional Reports-Southern Cone Report, 15 October 1992, RS-92-08, 1.

dominant role in organizing the hemispheric economic bloc to counter global developments. NAFTA will be setting the agenda in relation to hemispheric integration, and the United States will control NAFTA.⁶⁴

In summary, the near term impact of transitioning to a democratic government with its plans of increasing economic cooperation may have temporarily curtailed Brazil's ability to project influence throughout South America. The sheer magnitude of the domestic social-economic demands have dampened Brazil's role as an uncontested regional hegemon, at least for the short term. Ironically, the many fears expressed by analysts during the military regimes have come to the surface after they left power. The military presided over the creation of an industrial base capable of supporting their aspirations of achieving great power status. However, the social disorganization and economic liabilities that the civilian elected presidents inherited mandated that they concentrate on domestic problems as their first priority, and not blindly continue in the military's path towards great power status.

C. REELING UNCERTAINTIES AND NATIONALISTIC AUTONOMY

Brazilians have long viewed South America as a region in which their country is destined to exercise the dominant

⁶⁴see Robert Pastor, "The Latin American Option", Foreign Policy, no. 88, Fall 1992, 107.

influence. During the 1950's, military geopoliticians, the strongest advocates of this perspective defined and analyzed Brazil's internal and external South American strategies. With the return of civilian governments, foreign service officers and academics have participated increasingly in the debate over national security policy. One striking result has been the downplaying of geopolitical perspectives between Brazil and Argentina's civilian presidents, who have stressed economic, political and military cooperation. Nevertheless, the military throughout the Southern Cone continue to be concerned with regional spheres-of-influence.⁶⁵

In spite of growing capabilities and new leadership opportunities, Brazil continues to be contested for regional leadership by Argentina. Brazil's industrial and technological development continues to be selective and concentrated in the south detracting from Brazil's ability to project power and influence beyond its frontiers. Furthermore, the signatories to the Amazon treaty are displaying mixed feeling towards Brazil. They are apprehensive over the long range implications of further integrating in the Amazon basin development, such as with the Merconorte pact. At the Manaus summit of 1989, eleven years after signing the Amazon Pact Treaty, these countries rejected

⁶⁵see Wayne A. Selcher, "The National Security Doctrine and Policies of the Brazilian Government", Parameters, VII, no. 1, 1977, 10.

Brazil's proposal for "multinational conditionalities" in the exploitation of Amazon resources. The fear is that integrated regional development may threaten their national sovereignty over their largely vacant frontiers.⁶⁶

Brazil's potential continues to be tempered by the enormous internal problems that continually thwart aspirations for regional hegemony. These problems are primarily economic and social, with wide-spread dissatisfaction with past governmental performance. By mid-1993, Itamar Franco's policies received only a mediocre reception; the era of presidents with imperial powers is over, and congressional leaders openly taunt Franco's policies as little more than a list of good intentions.⁶⁷

The World Bank reports that Brazil still possesses the largest inequities of income distribution in the world, with the richest one percent of the population earning as much as the poorest 50 percent. The Franco administration is hinting at a new approach to Brazil's economic and social problems, putting poverty relief before the demands of foreign creditors. Brazil is truly at a cross road, no doubt blinded by the oncoming lights of enormous social problems. The impulse to regroup in a purely nationalistic position is

⁶⁶see "Apprehensions over Amazon Treaty", Latin American Regional Reports-Brazil, 1 June 1989, RB-89-05, 4.

⁶⁷see "Franco Unveils his New Programme: Reactivation, Social Safety Net and Job Creation", Latin American Weekly Report, 14 January 1993, WR-93-02, 14.

virtually irresistible, and the reality is that Brazil is stumbling with its national identity. Despite repeated past failures with its nationalistic-orientated policies, Brazil is returning to its old position of internal political balance. Two of the most influential historical ideas in the Southern Cone are the opposing concepts of nationalism verses internationalism. These schools of thought seem to alternate as the dominant ideology affecting both internal affairs and regional relations. However, internationalism is primarily a Spanish-American concept and not a Brazilian one. Originating in the struggle for independence it characterized the ideas of Simon Bolivar and San Martin. In recent years internationalism has been translated into the concept of intergrationalism, and specifically labeled as Mercosur.⁶⁸

In Brazil, internationalism has rarely been the dominant foreign policy posture. Nationalistic autonomy has been the rule, with the single goal of making Brazil a major power. Brazil has always pursued its own national interests, preferring bilateral agreements to multilateral ones. Though Brazil has joined multilateral groups in recent years, it continues to pursue its own course from within these groups. Even in initiating the Amazon Pact, Brazil's actions seem to indicate that it was designed to ensure the protection of

⁶⁸see "President Franco Warned of Possible Isolationism", (in Portuguese), O Estado De Sao Paulo, 22 November 1992, 3, translated and reported in FBIS, LAT-92, 227, 24 November 1992, 24.

Brazilian interest, forestall blocks against Brazil, assure its leadership role in the region, and counter Argentine influence in the Plata river basin.

The historical roots of Brazil's nationalism can be traced back to the colonial era, when native elites began to develop a sense of separate identity from Portugal. The more contemporary forms of nationalism stem from the values nurtured during the nation-building processes and through political/economic modernization. The subsequent rise of a new social class in Brazil has also stimulated nationalistic sentiments on a broad level, challenging the traditional elite power structures.⁶⁹

The school of political realism provides invaluable analysis into the geopolitical perspective of Brazil's desire for nationalistic autonomy. It is particularly helpful in explaining the chemistry of Third World political dealings with First World countries and their international nongovernmental organizations that function as their surrogates. Obviously, Third World countries like Brazil are behaving the way states have always behaved, attempting to maximize their power and their ability to control their own destinies. Beyond the most basic objective of preserving territory and political integrity which all states share, Brazil seeks to maximize both wealth and political control.

⁶⁹see Atkins (89), 64.

If a choice must be made between political control and wealth, realists contend that Third World states will overwhelmingly opt for political control since it is the more enduring of the two.⁷⁰

In sum, by focusing on the evolution of Brazilian policies, one could argue that the thrust of Brazilian policies has recently shifted away from an internationalistic base to the more traditional nationalistic position. Economic objectives may still be the primary means for diplomacy, but political and military objectives are beginning to reappear in Brazil's policies. The recent reorientation of Brazilian national politics has put economic policy at the service of political objectives espoused by Franco in the form of new social programs. The overall amount of effort devoted to foreign policy has diminished significantly, with national resources being even more narrowly concentrated on the national and regional level, with only a few global issues being seriously considered. On the global level, the internationalization of the Amazon is still a high priority in Brazil. In this region, Brazil can be expected to follow pragmatic policies tailored to national capabilities, with the expectation that these policies will increase Brazilian control over national destiny - a destiny that Brazilian

⁷⁰see Stephen D. Krasner, Structural Conflict: The Third World Against Global Liberalism, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 12.

geopoliticans argue will bestow a large measure of regional hegemony upon their country during the twenty-first century.⁷¹

⁷¹see Child (85), 35.

V. THE SEARCH FOR A DEFENSE STRATEGY IN BRAZIL

The balance of power in the Southern Cone has been the object of considerable attention due to the distribution and location of military units along borders. In the twentieth century, border disputes and saber rattling between these states reflected the continual shifting of this balance of power. Many experts acknowledge that a probable reason for these disputes was that many of the Latin American countries were slow to acquire the essential characteristics of sovereign states.⁷²

Regardless of previous altercations, the Cold War had a crystallizing effect on U.S. policies towards the Southern Cone countries. These policies were oriented toward the struggle between the forces of the West and the forces of International Communism under the geopolitical concept of containment. As a result, geopolitics rose in popularity among the Brazilian military thinkers and reflected the way the United States approached its sphere-of-influence. In the event of penetration or general war between these two powers, Brazil was supposed to play a role in defending the South Atlantic space.⁷³

⁷²see Tambs (79), 17.

⁷³see Gerald K. Haines, The Americanization of Brazil: A Study of U.S. Cold War Diplomacy in the Third World, 1945-1954, (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1989), 21.

In the first decade of the Cold War, geopolitics dominated the character of the United States-Brazilian alliance, with General Golbery do Couto e Silva as the master of ceremony. Military strategic thought reflected the U.S. program throughout Latin America of a continental defense against a possible Soviet invasion. The geographic importance of Brazil was recognized within the military as an essential component of U.S. global strategy. Brazil's geographic position gave it natural command over the entrance to the North Atlantic through the Recife-Dakar corridor. However, the end of the Cold War means that a significant portion of the East-West external missions are obsolete. This obsolescence has unfortunately come at a time of economic chaos and social mobilization throughout the Southern Cone. Rather than revert back to old rivalries, Southern Cone countries are attempting to strengthen their level of cooperation.⁷⁴

A. THE HISTORICAL ROLE OF THE ARMED FORCES

The first convergence of economic and military power reached its apogee at the end of the 19th century, when Southern Cone exports boomed and the state bureaucracy was called on to guarantee the economic order. The state's main task was to maintain the flow of agricultural products and raw

⁷⁴see Orlando Bonturi, Brazil: and the Vital South Atlantic, (Washington D.C.: National Defense University Pamphlet, 1988), 55; also see Jack Child, "The Status of South American Geopolitical Thinking", in Atkins (90), 53.

materials. As a result, the important process of nation-building within the Southern Cone had scarcely gotten underway when the German military missions arrived in Brazil. What followed was a contradictory process of infusing the military with the notion of sovereignty, while the civilian bureaucracy and political elites' promotion of an economic relationship with the First World served to limit the development of civilian governments.⁷⁵

In Brazil the state's sovereignty came to be represented by the military institutions, which pursued their own concept of a national defense strategy. The Armed Forces of Brazil became the guardians of the state and the symbol of national identity. Despite a modernizing military, there is evidence that attempts were made to make the transition from a caudillo-based landed elite to a more democratic regime. The repeated failure to make this transition left the military institution as the only representative of national unity and of the state itself.⁷⁶

Nationalism did not arrive in Brazil until the professionalization of the military. The new military took upon itself the banner of true national integration. Governments of the Southern Cone were called on to function as fully integrated states at a time when they could not even

⁷⁵see Atkins (89), 277.

⁷⁶see Rouquie (87), 62.

indicate where their own borders lay, let alone protect them. Brazil became an immense territorial power because its neighbors could not contain its westward movement. But in retrospect, the increase in Brazil's territory was not representative of the strength of Brazil's political institutions.

The military became the source of unity in preserving the integrity of the territory, giving legitimacy to the very existence of the state. Matters were complicated at the turn of the century when the military institutions introduced German ideology as the premiere form of professionalism. As a result, the civilian bureaucracy remained poorly trained, forcing the newly professionalized military into guaranteeing the integrity of the state. In the twentieth century, as the civilian government proved incapable of forming political structures that could carry out the business of running a modern state, the military took upon itself the mission of developing the bureaucracy as well.⁷⁷

The National Security Doctrine (NSD) that emerged within the Brazilian military tied the notion of nation-building to national security. As Brazil increased its contacts with the rest of the world it became quite obvious that its place in the global hierarchy was not the one the military felt it deserved. World War II had a contradictory affect on the

⁷⁷see Maria Helena Moreira Alves, State and Opposition in Military Brazil, (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1985).

Brazilian military, changing the national security strategy once and for all. While the war elevated Brazil's prestige because of its participation with the United States, it also made the Brazilian military aware of the gap between the capacities of the two countries. This gap reinforced the view in military circles that security could not be achieved without linkage to economic and technological development. Officers realized that to convert Brazil's military into a modern one, they would first have to change Brazil.⁷⁸

B. NATION-BUILDING AND THE SUPERIOR WAR COLLEGE

From the beginning, one of the goals of Brazilian geopolitical theorists has been the education of elites. The process has now been underway for over fifty years, starting with Everardo Backheuser and the German military missions. The most important aspect of Brazilian geopolitical education has been its dual civilian-military application. The education of elites has been accomplished both formally and informally, in government colleges and through the media. Geopolitical theorists like Travassos, Golbery and Mattos all taught in military schools, but the greatest influence in Brazil was the founding of the Escola Superior de Guerra (ESG), the Brazilian National War College, in 1949.

⁷⁸see Frank McCann, "The Brazilian Army and the Problem of Mission, 1939-1964", Journal of Latin American Studies, no. 12, May 1980, 120.

ESG sought to expose both officers and civilians to the major economic and political problems facing the state. In the 1950's students studied inflation and banking, among many other economic topics. After graduation, its alumni association served as the center for continued research, and held regular meetings that gathered ESG graduates to discuss key problems. There were two main themes behind the ESG's doctrine. First, national security and development were closely interrelated. According to Alfred Stepan; "National security for the ESG was seen to a great extent as a function of rationally maximizing the output of the economy and minimizing all sources of cleavages and disunity within the country."⁷⁹ This prescription called for a strong, centralized state with a passive civilian sector.

The second theme that Stepan considers relevant in ESG's doctrine is the ideological impact of the Cold War in shaping the developmental needs of Brazil. Underdevelopment was perceived as a potential source of political instability. This notion was shared by the United States in its view of Latin America during the Cold War. By promoting rapid economic development along capitalist lines, the military not

⁷⁹see Alfred Stepan, The Military in Politics; Changing Patterns in Brazil, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), [hereinafter "Stepan (71)"], 179.

only showed its support for the West, it also undermined the appeal of communism for the underprivileged.⁸⁰

The ESG has been the key link between geopolitical theory and government action, yet it denies any official role in the formulation of national policy. The school operates under the Armed Forces General Staff, an advisory body to the President. There are some significant differences between the ESG and the United States' War College; first, the high proportion of civilian students graduating from ESG (about one-half); second, the emphasis on planning national policy along domestic lines and not global strategic aspects; and thirdly, the systematic updating of graduates on national security development policies. The ESG is beginning to educate a fourth generation of Brazilian military and civilian leaders; despite official disclaimers the ESG continues to play an important and significant role in focusing military strategy in government planning.⁸¹

The military, particularly the Army, continues to act as the primary force behind geopolitics in Brazil. Today in Brazil, education in geopolitics is primarily a government

⁸⁰see Stepan (71), 180.

⁸¹In an interview with the author in February 1993, Colonel John Bevington, an ESG graduate and Director of the International Army Directorate, United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Monroe, Virginia, discussed the differences between ESG and the U.S. War College curriculums; also see Lars Schoultz, National Security and United States Policy Toward Latin America, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).

enterprise. There seems to be an effort to de-emphasize the impact of earlier geopolitical theorizing on developmental plans in the Amazon region. The reasons for this phenomenon are unclear, though they may include a change of academic interest or part of a calculated effort to downplay geopolitical theories to placate fearful neighbors. This explanation would fit with initiatives developed with Argentina during recent years, and Brazil's emphasis on public cooperation with other countries in the Amazon Pact.

The emphasis on nation-building that ESG brought to Brazil's foreign policy agenda reflects a set of aspirations more complex than simply focusing on past balances-of-power and spheres-of-influence. ESG graduates were looking at the unfinished business of nation-building, primarily in the Amazon, and its implications for Brazil's drive for great power status. Portraying the Amazon as a threatened region not only provides the military with a mission, it also supports their call, argues for the modernization of equipment and supports their goal of regional hegemony.

C. FORÇA TERRESTRE 1990 (LAND FORCE 1990)

Nation-building in Brazil has been an uneven process; it began with the professionalization of the military institution but ended before reforming the civilian political structures. In geopolitical terms, the professionalization of the military strengthened the legal status of Brazil but contributed to the

pushing and shoving associated with power politics in the region.⁸²

The military regimes left a legacy of the subordination of diplomacy to the geopolitical notions of state competition and regional hegemony. The military institutions fostered the image of the state struggling for survival, emphasizing competition with neighboring countries rather than cooperation. With the transition from authoritarian to democratic rule, a new set of security variables became paramount. In Brazil, this transition of power was achieved through a negotiated process in which the military retained significant power in the country's National Security Council (CSN). As a result, the civilian government had been somewhat timid in demanding institutional reforms. After President José Sarney took office in 1985, the Brazilian military announced its plan to embark on a costly new modernization program to perform its newly defined role as the defender of territorial integrity and democracy. General Rubens Bayma Denys, the CSN secretary under President Sarney, announced that Brazil had to be prepared to take action in the event of border conflicts between neighboring countries. The program, known as "Força Terrestre 1990" (FT-90), entailed an annual outlay of about \$100 million, which would be used to purchase missile launchers, helicopters, and cannons among other

⁸²see Thomas E. Skidmore, The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil, 1964-1985, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

equipment, and introduce new training courses for military personnel.⁸³

FT-90 reflected the final aspect of Brazil's military strategy of defending the long western and northern borders shared with Bolivia, Peru, Colombia and Venezuela. Brazilian officers used what was then the most significant threat to justify the expense of conquering and defending the frontier space. Their argument centered on the risk of spill-over from neighboring states' guerrilla wars. The FT-90, was expected to draw its weapon requirements from domestic sources, which were operating at top capacity in fulfilling contracts with oil rich Middle Eastern countries.⁸⁴

In addition to this program the military also created a military zone in the western Amazon, reflecting the new emphasis on external security. The army gained support from the Ministry of Planning, which trimmed the budgets of other ministries, such as interior, health and communication to pay for the initial installments. The strengthening of the northern borders became a welcome new political diversion for the unemployed military leadership, who were in the process of transferring governmental powers to civilian control. But in

⁸³see "Army Set For Major Modernisation", Latin American Regional Reports-Brazil, 3 January 1986, RB-86-01, 5; also see "General Discloses Army Modernization Project", (in Portuguese), O Estado De Sao Paulo, 11 December 1985, 7, translated and reported in FBIS, 16 December 1985, D1.

⁸⁴see "Armed Forces To Get U.S. \$250m a Year", Latin American Regional Reports-Brazil, 14 August 1986, RB-86-07, 5.

a much broader sense, the announcement of the final phase of Brazil's "geopolitical maneuvering" coincided perfectly with the military's defense strategy. The plan authorized by CSN was military in nature, but in Golbery's terms was the "valuating" aspect of the Amazon's frontier space and a important aspect of the military's grandeur strategy. The Calha Norte project was designed by the military to serve as a magnet for internal migration to the previously unoccupied mineral-rich regions of the Amazon. In the future the project's military aspects will fade, giving control of the communities it creates to local leadership.⁸⁵ This will release the military for the final time from its century-old internal development mission, and allow it to focus on controlling the entire region in the role of a hegemon.

⁸⁵see Tarbutton (91), 21.

VI. A NEW AGENDA FOR THE MILITARY⁸⁶

Significant changes are taking place within the armed forces and in their relationship to civilian authorities in Brazil. These new patterns are being shaped by new contacts between representatives of the armed forces, elected officials, and journalists. These relationships have also affected the development of a new agenda in civil-military relations. In the strengthening of the political structures during the Collor impeachment crisis there was a broad recognition by major political actors, and especially the armed forces, that the 1988 Constitution was the legitimate and proper guide for the management of political conflicts in Brazil.⁸⁷ Therefore, the mission of preserving internal order, as stated by the Constitution, has taken a secondary position to the military's efforts of building a professional identity through an external orientation as defined in the national defense strategy.

⁸⁶see Scott D. Tollefson, "The United States and Brazil: Critical Issues in the Security Relationship", Department of National Security Affairs, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, 1 May 1992, 20. An unclassified report prepared for the office of the Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs, Inter-American Affairs.

⁸⁷see Julia Preston, "Brazil's President Steps Aside: Collor Gives Up Rule to Face Senate Trial", The Washington Post, 3 October 1992, A13; also see "Collor Cliffhanger", Latin American Weekly Report, 7 January 1993, WR-93-01, 3. Collor submitted letter of resignation on 29 December 1992.

Turning to Latin America, one observes an interesting variety of military action and inactions resulting from the most recent wave of democratization. The Peruvian armed forces, for example, were instrumental in President Fujimori's autogolpe.⁸⁸ In Venezuela, the military uprising in early February 1992 was designed to remove the President; he was accused of being negligent in fighting corruption and failing to promote economic recovery.⁸⁹ General Pinochet remains as commander of the Chilean military, imposing limits on President Alwyn's control over the military institution.⁹⁰ In Paraguay, the presidential elections of May 1993, were overseen by a military intent of ensuring a competitive race while fighting charges of widespread of their own corruption.⁹¹ Only in Argentina has the civilian government secured an acceptable civil-military relationship, with the military subordinated by a set of laws enacted by Congress.

⁸⁸see "Fujimori Strikes Against Congress: Wide Popular Support for Military-Approved Self-Coup", Latin American Regional Reports-Andean Group, 21 May 1992, RA-92-04, 2.

⁸⁹see Georgie Anne Geyer, "Democracy Betrayed", World Monitor, September 1992, 44.

⁹⁰see Alan Angell, "What Remains of Pinochet's Chile?", (Institute of Latin American Studies: University of London, 1992), Occasional paper no. 3, 1.

⁹¹see "Cabinet Changes Not Due to Scandal: Fears for 1993 Elections as Top Brass Issue a Warning", Latin American Regional Reports-Southern Cone, 24 December 1992, RS-92-10, 6; also see "Colorado Crisis Fuels Coup Rumors", Latin American Regional Reports-Southern Cone, 4 February 1993, RS-93-01, 3.

A. INDICATORS OF CHANGE

The course of civil-military relations in Brazil has changed remarkably in the last few years. For decades Brazilians were accustomed to the cross-fire of accusations and warnings between representatives of the armed forces and the opposition forces. This confrontation was deeply rooted in the mistrust concerning the other's intentions, with each side believing the other incapable of participating in democratic politics. Some scholars are now suggesting that the demise of military-authoritarian regimes and the subsequent consolidation of the democratic regimes are actually part of the same developmental process.⁹²

In the 1990's, both the military and civilian political segments have found common themes that are transforming their respective political roles. The collapse of the military regime suggests that that form of governing became incapable of providing political solutions to popular demands, losing both legitimacy and popular support. At the same time, the armed forces also lost their professional identity, as a military fighting force, as it became more and more involved

⁹²see Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, "Political Crafting of Democratic Consolidation or Destruction: European and South American Comparisons", in Robert A. Pastor (ed.) Democracy in the Americas: Stopping the Pendulum, (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1989), 41.

in non-military activities through the years.⁹³ The military was more concerned with developing and running the country than with military preparedness.

The military's withdrawal from national politics took place in several stages and over the course of several years. The realization of the loss of their professional identity did not occur overnight, nor were the causes clear to the military's leadership. One hypothesis is that the return to an emphasis on professionalism grew out of the demands of junior officers who had grown uncomfortable with the reality of having a hollow force, fragmented planning, and low readiness.⁹⁴ As the leadership renovated itself these concerns gained momentum through internal debate, and the military took notice of its operational decay and began to react. This reaction seems to have started with Argentina's failure in the Malvinas' War in 1982, and was reinforced by images from the high-tech Persian Gulf War in 1992. The Brazilian political leadership refusal to take an active part in the Gulf conflict probably resulted from its economic and military connections to Iraq. This refusal caused Brazil's military to lose international prestige, though the military

⁹³Each branch of the Armed Forces has been involved in what the First World would consider non-military activities. The Army with its road and nation-building projects in the Amazon; the Air Force and its role in air traffic control and airport management; and the Navy in commercial shipping supervision and ocean port activities.

⁹⁴see Stepan (88), 55.

ministers had desperately wanted to support the international coalition with military forces. While still opposing a new military agreement with the United States, the Brazilian military has accused Itamarty of pursuing a hopelessly anti-U.S. policy.⁹⁵

Another aspect of ideological change is the shift in attitude toward the ideal political system for Brazil. Though the armed forces have desired control of the political system in the past, they now want only to sustain the stability of constitutional rule in national politics. This shift has been perceived as a return to the military's cherished belief that the armed forces should act as a moderating force in national political struggles, as opposed to assuming control of the reins of power.⁹⁶

The lower profile by the military was displayed during the last presidential crisis. On 29 September 1992, the Brazilian federal Chamber of Deputies voted to authorize the Senate to initiate trial proceedings against Fernando Collor on charges of corruption. The political struggle which followed, with all its intense debate and popular emotional appeal, was placed solely under the authority of the National Congress.

⁹⁵see "Washington Letter, Anti-U.S. Policy", Latin American Regional Reports-Brazil, 11 July 1991, RB-91-06, 8.

⁹⁶see "Justice Minister Notes Absence of Military Role", (in Spanish), EFE, 25 September 1992, 1643 GMT, translated and reported in FBIS, LAT-92, 188, 28 September 1992, 18; also see "Collor Drops most of Reform Proposals: Eye on the Military", Latin American Regional Reports-Brazil, 24 October 1991, RB-91-09, 3.

The military ministers clearly stated their intentions to stand outside of the debates and abide with any decisions reached by Congress. This act assured the political disposition of a crisis which, in the past, would most probably have triggered a military response; it is today regarded as an unprecedented display of the military's institutional maturity.⁹⁷

B. A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH SOCIETY AND CONGRESS

Brazil's civil-military relations are shaped today by a new dialogue between representatives of the armed forces and civil society. In accepting the new government and the premise that national politics should be exercised within a constitutional framework, the military is free to turn their efforts to the needs of the services. These needs include recuperating the purchasing power of salaries, the search for budgetary means to sustain the principal programs underway, the modernization of equipment and tactics, and ensuring the correct political orientation for the role of the armed forces in national defense.⁹⁸

⁹⁷see "Collor is Unseated by the Book: Will Franco become New Version of Alan Garcia", Latin American Weekly Report, 24 December 1992, WR-92-50, 5.

⁹⁸see "Text of Guidelines for Army High Command", (in Portuguese), O Estado De Sao Paulo, 19 November 1992, 4, translated and reported in FBIS, LAT-92, 226, 23 November 1992, 28.

Thinking about national defense strategy in a democratic environment is a new concept for both the military and civilian leadership. The 1988 Constitution calls for the armed forces to maintain internal order and provide for national defense. Given that the military has proven its willingness to forgo intervention in national politics, more attention can now be dedicated to Brazil's external defense strategy. The military's search for political support and legitimization of their national defense role began when military commanders opened a dialogue with individuals and organizations concerning military affairs.⁹⁹

The most important dialogue occurred in Congress. During less than three years as ministers, all three military chiefs in the Collor administration testified before Congress more times than all their preceding colleagues combined. In the Chamber of Deputies, the National Defense Commission has become the main forum to debate the problems of military planning, administration and budget. Over the course of many sessions, the country has learned a great deal about the views held by the military leadership, including the uncertainties caused by changes in world politics, the risks derived from their outdated equipment, potential threat areas, and the huge budgetary difficulties faced by the military. In this environment the military has sought to teach elected

⁹⁹see "Military Resists Pressure to Play Anti-Drug Role", Latin American Regional Reports-Brazil, 9 July 1992, RB-92-06, 8.

representatives and the country about the status and capabilities of the armed forces.¹⁰⁰ This teaching process has been further extended through the publication of articles written by military officers.

The results of this political move has established a new channel of communication between the leadership in the armed forces and members of both houses in Congress, showing that the military is ready to step out from behind the Executive,¹⁰¹ but vastly more important is its increased level of operational autonomy in developing the aspects of the national defense strategy. The military finds itself in the precarious position of distancing itself from the executive branch while protecting its institutional structure in the halls of Congress.

However, the critical strategic aspect of this new dialogue is not the military's new willingness to openly debate issues which it feels needs to be addressed; rather, it is the issues that have not been brought up in open debate and are therefore suspiciously absent from the new dialogue. For the near term the military's grand strategy will not end up in a Congressional hearing for public debate. In Brazil, inquiry

¹⁰⁰see "Army General Views Defense Industry Prospects", (in Portuguese), Tecnologia & Defesa, May-June 1992, 5-8, translated and reported by FBIS, LAT-92, 227, 24 November 1992, 31.

¹⁰¹see "Military Frustrated by Lack of Funds: Complaints about Obsolete Equipment, Shortages, Poor Pay", Latin American Regional Reports-Brazil, 11 July 1991, RB-91-06, 4.

into military policies is still only as deep as the military allows, covering only support functions, such as personnel, training, pay, and equipment. The military leadership on one hand recognizes the need for congressional support for institutional survival, while on the other hand is keeping the real motivating strategy cloaked in darkness. The military is playing a subtle game in its drive to sustain their grand strategy in the Amazon, a strategy which is discussed in greater detail in part three of this study.

C. THE CONCEPT OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

An important theme in numerous political commentaries has been the complaint of limited civilian oversight of the military, and the lack of general guidelines for force planning. In Brazil, military plans are still integrated from the bottom up, with each service defining its own needs. In the absence of a joint chief of staff, military planners continue to define their own national priorities and allocate their resources in support of their decision.¹⁰²

Since the early fifties, the Superior War College (ESG) has reinforced the notion within the military organizations of the need for development of a national plan that the government would follow. At ESG, this idea was executed by

¹⁰²see "Army Minister Upholds Creation of Defense Ministry", (in Portuguese), Voz Do Brasil, 9 December 1992, 2100 GMT, translated and reported in FBIS, LAT-92, 238, 10 December 1992, 21.

the national administration via the military regime. The military leadership experienced some early successes. The most important document was the National Strategic Concept, which evaluated the international environment and generated a list of perceived threats, hypotheses of war, and the potential use of the armed forces in conflicts. Though required under ESG's charter, there is no evidence that the National Security Concept has been updated since the 1970s.

Without clear foreign threats to national integrity and interests, the military's demands for political orientation and resources seems to have faltered under other priorities in the national political agenda. As a result, Brazil's military budget has been steadily decreasing, reaching 0.6 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 1991, and further dipping to 0.3 percent in 1993. The military argues that these levels are much too low, and put the organizational survivability of the military at risk. However, this spending cap continues to be enforced by direction of the Executive's economic officials. The military has begun to feel that elected officials are not paying attention to their pleas and begun to lobby strongly for their views elsewhere, provoking debates on military issues among politicians, press, and the academics. This process has served to legitimate their positions and seeks a consensus in the government's budgetary decision-making processes.

In the Collor administration, the military did not find the decision making support it expected from the Secretariat for Strategic Affairs. As Collor consolidated power, he brought what was left of the former National Intelligence Service (SNI), and the National Security Council (SADEN) into a single Secretariat for Strategic Affairs (SAE) under the office of the presidency. In March of 1991, most of the military officers were purged by SAE's civilian leadership, who turned most of the organization's efforts to the problems of economic development. Most importantly, Collor reinforced civilian rule by curbing the entrenched political power of the army. This may have been the final straw for the military, in part explaining the strong lobbying efforts by the armed forces to regain control of SAE under the Franco administration.¹⁰³

Another general theme in the public commentary is the misunderstood arms production and arms transfers situation, and its role in strategic planning. The evolution of Brazil's arms transfers policies, (guns for oil) follows the previously described logic based on the country's increasing demand for oil. The primary result of this increasing demand will

¹⁰³see "Overview of SAE Structure, Activities", (in Portuguese), O Globo, 2 June 1991, 10, translated and reported in FBIS, LAT-91, 128, 3 July 1991, 21; also see "Collor Not All Bad", Latin American Regional Reports-Brazil, 22 October 1992, RB-92-09, 8.

probably be future arms transfer agreements with more Middle Eastern countries, specifically Iran.¹⁰⁴

A brief review of the dilemma facing the military's leadership on how to structure the armed forces in the absence of general guidelines, sheds considerable light on the question of Brazil's national strategy and the issues that have yet to be confronted. While there is general agreement that there is a need for technology modernization in the armed forces, the degree of technological update needed and its distribution throughout the force structure are not yet clear. For example, Brazil continues in its development and construction of a nuclear powered submarine at the Navy's request. With unusual support from Congress, a multi-year budgetary allocation continues to be approved. Under strictly military considerations, it is easy to understand the operational advantages of a nuclear submarine over conventional ones, especially considering Brazil's long Atlantic coastline. Nevertheless, it is still not clear what benefits such capability would provide for the naval force and for Brazil's security. Military application is apparently not the primary consideration in the decision to develop nuclear powered submarines; Brazil has decided to acquire the industrial know-how for building this type of platform, and

¹⁰⁴see "Visit by Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati", (in Persian) Tehran Voice of The Islamic Republic of Iran, 2030 GMT 16 February 1993, translated and reported in FBIS, LAT-93, 031, 18 February 1993, 23.

the political decision has been made to bring submarine production and deployment into full operation.¹⁰⁵

Brazil's military equipment, such as patrol boats, combat aircraft, artillery pieces and air defense missiles, are not just outdated, but numerically insufficient even for training purposes. The situation is further exacerbated by the lack of spare parts, fuel, and ordnance needed to ensure proper readiness levels. Another issue is the destiny of Brazil's indigenous arms industry.¹⁰⁶ The technological and commercial successes of the Brazilian arm industries, in both local and international markets, started in the mid-1970s. Beginning in the late eighties, however, Brazil began to lose its foreign markets. The end of the Iran-Iraq War, the Gulf War, and the general surplus of arms in the world market, all contributed in this downturn. This cut off Brazil's primary source of oil. Brazilian arms manufactures, such as EMBRAER, ENGESA, and AVIBRAS, went deep into debt, teetering on virtual bankruptcy.¹⁰⁷ The national arms industry had symbolized Brazil's determination to become a world power and reduce

¹⁰⁵see Jose Casado, "Policy Priorities of Military Ministers Viewed", (in Portuguese), Gazeta Mercantil, 9 October 1992, 1-6, translated and reported in FBIS, LAT-92, 209, 28 October 1992, 40.

¹⁰⁶see Roberto Godoy, "Financial Situation of Material Industry Viewed", (in Portuguese), O Estado De Sao Paulo, 15 November 1992, 17, translated and reported in FBIS, LAT-92, 223, 18 November 1992, 30.

¹⁰⁷see "Troubled EMBRAER Slashes Workforce: Slimmer but Stronger for Next Year's Privatization", Latin American Regional Reports-Brazil, 9 July 1992, RB-92-06, 6.

foreign political dependency; now the industry is searching for partnerships with foreign companies in an effort to survive. In the absence of a national security concept, it is the military that will try to decide which industries are tied to the symbols of national power, providing institutional support for their survival in the marketplace.¹⁰⁸

D. CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

The military still has a lot of institutional power and uses it to further its vision of Brazil's grand strategy. During the Cold War, the Brazilian military's most credible mission was the defense of the continent under U.S. leadership, and fighting internal rebellion. In the 1990's, new internal and external scenarios are beginning to appear, however, which are finding the political and military structures unprepared.

International pressures to preserve the Amazon's tropical environment have been identified by the military as Brazil's highest threat, and it convincingly argues that coercive measures could one day be used against the country. A related problem in the Amazon region is the permeability of borders,

¹⁰⁸see Defense and Foreign Policy: Strategic Policy, Table on World Arms Transfers, 31 December 1992, 18. Brazil received the first of fourteen AMX fighters from AMX International, an Italian-Brazilian conglomerate, in May 1992; also see "National Company to Export AMX Airplane Parts", (in Portuguese), O Globo, 14 November 1992, 31, translated and reported in FBIS, LAT-92, 222, 17 November 1992, 17.

with natives Indians, migrants, smugglers, mineral prospectors, and drug traffickers fighting federal control.¹⁰⁹ In these wide areas, the presence of the armed forces is one of the few symbols of State presence. Thus, the occupation of the Amazon region has become a prime area for military planning, provoking the costly deployment of forces to border areas, new military training, and the purchase of new equipment. This part of Brazil's military's strategy may inadvertently be leading the country down a path that will prove destabilizing to region's political and economic stability.

The converging forces in Brazil are fostered by geopolitical theories and represent the need for a legitimate military mission. These forces are attempting to mesh at a time of political uncertainty, economic hardship and as a wave of nationalism sweeps over the country. The process of regional integration is the most vivid challenge. If Mercosur becomes a success, the member countries must coordinate their foreign policies, which implies closer defense policy orientation. If the regional project fails, the assignment of blame will tarnish regional tranquility and may provoke another period of regional mistrust. As long as Brazil maintains a comfortable stand in the international security

¹⁰⁹see "Garimpeiros Back", Latin American Weekly Report, 7 January 1993, WR-93-01, 12. The newspaper Folha de Sao Paulo reported that 11,000 gold miners have again invaded the Yanomani Indian reservation.

environment, the political system has enough breathing room that it does not feel pressed to produce a defense policy that kowtows to the aspirations of the professional military. Nor, under the pressures of economic difficulties, will elected officials allocate scarce financial resources and political support for military force. However, the armed forces have reached society with a new dialogue on subject matters with which civilian politicians are not knowledgeable. The military does not seek operational information, but rather the resources and autonomy to control its own force structure and grand strategy. Such control points towards the Amazon Basin.

VII. A GRAND STRATEGY OR SECURITY DILEMMA¹¹⁰

The debate concerning regional rivalry for leadership and the military's national search for security, power, prestige, and resources continues today in the Southern Cone. Sub-regional politics have brought strategic geopolitical components into play. The vast Amazon Basin, until recently largely undeveloped, has traditionally formed a physical barrier between Brazil and most of its neighbors. In the Southern Cone this barrier offered the separate states limited protection and political autonomy. At the same time it impeded trade and inter-state association. In the 1960's the Brazilian military recognized the limitations of relying solely on a fluvial strategy and began constructing the transnational highways and railroad networks. The opening of Brazil's interior simultaneously linked the entire region, facilitated trade, and rejuvenated Brazil's long-term obsession that an industrialized country or international organization might attempt to take over the Amazon. In strategic terms the Brazilian government viewed the colonization of the Amazon as the answer to its national

¹¹⁰see Michael C. Desch, "Transitions to Democracy: The Role of the Militaries", in a paper presented at the Center for International Studies, University of Southern California, 12 July 1991, [hereinafter "Desch (91)"]. The author has drawn heavily from this paper and is indebted to this previous work by Michael Desch.

security concerns. Loss of the Amazon to international control would represent the final blow to Brazil's dreams of Manifest Destiny and great power status. Consequently, Brazil's military accepted the mission of developing and integrating the Amazon as its highest priority.¹¹¹

A. PREVIOUS ANALYSIS OF BRAZIL'S MILITARY STRATEGY¹¹²

The earliest analysis of the role of the military in Brazil's strategy development reflected the traditional belief that the military was a threat to democracy. This trend in theorizing was intended to examine the military's so-called black box by focusing on institutional and organizational structures. This research identified the two primary factors that were responsible for shaping military institutions and their subsequent strategies. These two factors were the functional imperative, or its mission, and the societal imperative, or its role in the political processes of the state.¹¹³ It was subsequently determined that the key variable for both these functions was the overarching threat.

¹¹¹see Alan Riding, "Brazil to Set Up Bases on Borders", New York Times, 1 November 1986; also see Nigel J.H. Smith, Rainforest Corridors, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1982), 9.

¹¹²see Stepan (71), 55; also see Henry Bienen, "Armed Forces and National Modernization: Continuing the Debate", Comparative Politics, vol. 16, no. 1, October 1983, 2.

¹¹³see Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relation, (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957), 2.

Threats were determined to vary in source, external or internal, and in intensity, high or low. Thus, the source of a threat determined the particular type of military doctrine while the intensity resulted in greater or lesser military cohesion. The conclusion was that a combination of a specific type of doctrine with its corresponding level of cohesion determines the orientation of the military's strategy.¹¹⁴

As discussed earlier in this study Brazil's military was modernized and professionalized through European exchanges. The European militaries were exporting a brand of professionalization which was derived from an environment where the threat was extensively external. This was in direct contrast to the Brazil's geopolitical situation at the turn of the century. This is not to say that the Brazilian military had no external missions but rather that their primary orientation was internal.¹¹⁵ Brazil's military leadership may have understood the nuances of the European defense models but became consumed by the internal domestic and social demands of the state. In accepting the missions of internal security and nation-building over an external orientation the Brazilian military was tied to a strategy it could not control. This orientation was critical, because externally-

¹¹⁴see Desch (91), 20.

¹¹⁵see Rouquie (87), 98; also see Alfred Stepan, "The New Professionalism of Internal Warfare and Military Role Expansion", in Abraham F. Lowenthal, ed., Armies and Politics in Latin America, (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1976), 246.

oriented armies do not usually rule, and internally-oriented armies do not usually fight externally.¹¹⁶

There exists a proven incompatibility between the internal and external uses of military force. Quite simply the more often the armed forces are used internally the less capable they become of waging war externally. This is the case for two reasons. First, the time and resources spent training on one of these mission is not transferable to the other; and second, armed forces used in an internal role do not enjoy a high level of popular support that is required for external operations.¹¹⁷

The historical internal orientation of Brazil's military has been a continual threat to civilian rule because military strategies linked internal economic development to military missions. This was clearly the case in the development and priorities of the national security doctrine at ESG. The key characteristics of this strategy was its domestic focus and extremely broad definition of national security.¹¹⁸

These internally-oriented strategies were an important factor in the military's seizure of power in 1964 because they provided the framework in how the military could rule. The

¹¹⁶see Alexander Barrus, "The Risk of Intervention Gone?", in Goodman, Mendelson, and Rial (90), 178.

¹¹⁷see Guillermo O'Donnell, Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions About Uncertain Democracies, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1986), 43.

¹¹⁸see Stepan (71), 168.

key element of any strategy is the intensity of the threat, which conveniently correlates into the level of cohesiveness in military institutions.¹¹⁹ The most persuasive arguments why Brazil's military intervened into government has been that it was in the military's own institutional interest to do so. This underscores the significant level of military autonomy in Brazil. It was this same aspect of operational autonomy that surrounds Brazil's contemporary military strategy in the Amazon.¹²⁰

The Brazilian military seriously began to reassess its external security situation following the Falklands/Malvinas War. The military not only concluded that there were legitimate external threats, but that there internal orientation was not capable of achieving their goals. Given that military unity is the strongest when threatened from without and when considered the relative ease in forging a consensus among military officers on the threat in the Amazon, herein lies the core of Brazil's current national defense strategy.

What has been much more problematic for the military was arriving at a consensus on specific branch (Army, Navy, and Air Force) missions and the resourcing of these missions. The

¹¹⁹see Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, "Political Crafting of Democratic Consolidation or Destruction: European and South American Comparisons", in Pastor (89), 51.

¹²⁰see George Philip, The Military in South American Politics, (Dover, New Hampshire: Croom Helm, 1985), 180.

Brazilian military continues to operate without a single core or unifying structure. Each branch of the services competes independently for resourcing, equipment, and doctrine development. Traditionally the Navy and Air Force ministers have been hesitant to act in joint ventures with the Army given its preeminence. All this is changing today in Brazil. As the military nears the final completion of its nation-building mission, its internal strategy orientation towards the development of the Amazon will end. When the entire country has been intergraded through the geopolitical theories of earlier military thinkers the military strategy will change its emphasis towards an external orientation. This external strategy should increase Brazil's interest in the Caribbean, the South Atlantic, the Antarctica, and the West coast of Africa.

B. BRAZIL'S MILITARY STRATEGY: DEVELOPMENT OF THE AMAZON

Today Brazil is geographically divided into military regions, each with its own military headquarters. In the Amazon region, the Army, Navy, and the Air Force each have military headquarters. The Army in particular has concentrated on supporting the Federal government's efforts to integrate the Amazon region with the rest of the country. The mission of the Military Command of the Amazon (CMA) is to

provide both internal and external security and ensure the development of the area.¹²¹

The first portion of this mission statement, providing security, is a similar requirement for all of Brazil's military regions. Of course, the geography, troops, and facilities are different for each region, but the task is basically the same throughout Brazil. It is the second part of the mission statement this study considers significant; development of the Amazon basin. The military commanders in the Amazon are specifically tasked to guarantee the continuation of the nation-building process as a military operation.

This additional mission translates into numerous individual and unit level tasks needed to be planned, funded, and executed by a limited number of staff officers. In the headquarters of the CMA very little time and energy is dedicated to actually planning for the defense of the region. In contrast, the vast majority of effort is consumed in the non-military aspects of nation-building. These tasks include the establishment of outposts; constructing and maintaining roads; providing public health services; and in teaching elementary and secondary level education courses. The government's official response to these non-military requirements has always been that the use of military units is

¹²¹see Azevedo (92), 23.

beneficial because the skills of the individual soldiers are being honed and expanded by operating in a hostile environment, the Amazon basin.

This study proposes that the Amazon basin is the current but not the final goal of Brazil's national defense strategy. The military's perceived preoccupation with the Amazon is the final phase of an extremely long-term mission given to the military to develop and integrate the country. The widely supported perception of an existing threat to the Amazon, or the internationalization of the Amazon, continues to receive plenty of attention throughout Brazil. Many of Brazil's senior military officers believe that the sovereignty over the Amazon is actually threatened and are calling for Brazil to prepare to defend itself against the perceived imminent foreign invasion. Interestingly, this argument for the defense of the Amazon always includes a lengthy list of more troops, equipment, and weapons for the military, as the military attempts to dip into the public coffers.¹²²

The military is using the increasingly popular perception of an existing threat to further its cause. According to retired General Oswaldo Muniz Oliva, former commander of ESG, "Time is short and we need to join forces to defend ourselves". With the collapse of communism, the military has lost its most viable threat and one that kept the military

¹²²see Jornal Do Basil, 21 September 1991.

equipped and trained. Today in Brazil, the armed forces have substituted the "Green" threat for the "Red" one.¹²³

It is crucial to recognize, however, that the Brazilian military has removed itself from its past role of political interventionism. Today if the Brazilian military cannot convince the public or the congress of their intentions in the Amazon, their strategy risks the danger of being misunderstood or unsupported, and in Brazil the development and integration of the Amazon is one of the only projects that provides sustained resources. This is not to imply that the military institutions are not aware of regional or even global events, only that in successfully accomplishing the mission of integrating the Amazon the military is seeking the final release from their time-honored internal orientation.

The issues of acceptability and proportionality are at the heart of Brazil's national defense dilemma. Brazil's military strategy will become credible only when the decision-makers in Congress accept and fund the components of such a strategy and the military is still unprepared to openly provide the details of its strategy. Over the last few years, the president has lost his ability to influence the military institutions through power sharing and the public has begun to be aware of the issues at stake. Brazil's military will not be able to

¹²³see Veja, 11 September 1991.

adopt a grand strategy unacceptable to the public or its representatives in the future.

A cohesive military strategy has many facets and components and by no means does it consist of only a political position. The procurement of military hardware has little to do with diplomacy, which is necessary, but cannot be a substitute for a strategy. The current lack of a coherent grand strategy in Brazil, however, is based on political circumstances. Because of this lack of inner cohesion and trust between institutions, Brazil is currently incapable of producing a broad strategy. An important aspect of Brazil's new military leadership is their recognition that in countries with democratic constitutions everyone must be able to engage in compromise and consensus building. In Brazil, consensus is difficult to achieve and confusion abounds with worst-case scenarios seemingly emerging from every sector.

C. BRAZIL AS AN ASPIRING HEGEMON¹²⁴

This portion of the study represents the culmination of the research and analysis on Brazil's national defense strategy. As previously noted Brazil's military strategy remains unpublished, and therefore, must be reconstructed through the process of piecing together a complex and

¹²⁴see Myers (91), 225; also see Stephen G. Walker (ed.), Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987), [hereinafter "Walker (87)"].

fragmented picture. This process involves a partial revealing of how Brazil, as an aspiring regional hegemon, pursues its strategy goals. The research sought to describe how Brazil's military built upon the perceived threat in the Amazon as a best-case selection of possible strategic responses. Reduced to its most basic ingredients, the struggle to define Brazil's strategy consists of two basic elements; national objective to be achieved and the means for achieving them. One expert has proposed a number of factors that have shaped Brazil's emphasis on its regional role perception and the formulation of a plausible threat, as in the Amazon. Once conceptualized, this threat was internalized and a strategic response was selected and sold to the public. Brazil's strategic response has been to encourage regional economic integration and regional developments under Brazilian leadership with an eye towards regional hegemony.¹²⁵

This change in the political orientation of the government tends to be followed with subsequent changes in military orientation in the area of strategic definition. Thus, Brazil as an aspiring hegemon selected the strategic response of initiating integration under their new leadership. Similarly Brazil redeployed its army following Argentina's use of force in the Falklands/Malvinas island dispute, and announced the

¹²⁵see Walker (87), 265.

Calha Norte and FT-90 programs for military modernization in the late 1980's.

Traditionally, public opinion resists rapid changes in how national strategies are defined, further hindering the military's willingness to reveal its national strategy. The dilemma is that democratic leaders are not against the military's desire for regional hegemony but openly cannot support such a strategy. Therefore, in order to gain mass support, the military must exaggerate the threat by assigning its highest priority to the efforts of further integrating the country through their Amazon strategy. This dilemma encourages Brazil to attempt to implement clandestine policies that lack broad public support. Not surprisingly, it has proved almost impossible to keep these plans secret and once they are officially discovered, it paralyzes the strategy's capability of success.

In summary, this study's framework implies that Brazil's decisions to either emphasize or downplay its role is linked to the pursuit of regional influence and is driven by geopolitical considerations. Earlier analysis confirmed that the geopolitical structure of Brazil had a direct impact on policy decision and is leading Brazil to act in the capacity of an aspiring regional hegemon. In this context, Brazil's specific policy goals are designed to dominate regional organizations. Based on the assumption that their influence is the greatest within the region, Brazil prefers resolving

disputes in institutions where they enjoy the lion share of control (such as - Mercosur, Merconorte, Amazon Pact, and Andean Pact).¹²⁶

Brazil's relative strength and size influences its choice of political roles within the Southern Cone. The greater its economic advantage over its neighbors, the more likely it is to assert economic policies into its regional leadership strategy. When contrasted with its pursuit of military or political advantage, Brazil has encountered less opposition when it emphasizes strictly economic leadership. This concept of increasing economic influence appears to have reinforced Brazil's decision makers with the perception that there is an even greater role for them to play in other regional matters. It is a relatively short step for Brazil to begin formulating policies designed to consolidate their regional influence.¹²⁷

¹²⁶see Wolf Grabendorff, "Interstate Conflict Behavior and Regional Potential for Conflict in Latin America", Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs, vol. 24, no. 3, August 1982, 285.

¹²⁷see David J. Myers, "Brazil: The Quest for Leadership", in Myers (91), 225.

VIII. TOWARDS THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Regional geopolitical systems have further crystallized as theorists grapple with the terms and corresponding position of states in this new international arena. During the Cold War the world was divided into geographic regions that represented the battleground for global competition between the United States and the Soviet Union. The decline in superpower influence has permitted regional states to pursue long-suppressed hegemonic aspirations. Regional hegemons, by definition, are states that possess sufficient power to dominate a subordinate state system. One expert explains that the role selection of states aspiring to regional influence is one of a leader and protector. In this context, aspiring hegemons pursue a broad range of strategies to discourage superpowers from projecting power into their region, thereby assuring their dominant position within the region.¹²⁷

It is common for aspiring hegemons to overstate threats. In Brazil the threat to the Amazon is often overstated for this same reason. In the Southern Cone there are vacant borders between states that have had almost no diplomatic relations. Toward such a neighbor, Brazil might seek to act in a non-alarmist manner, while consolidating Brazil's sphere-

¹²⁸see K.J. Holsti, "Toward a Theory of Foreign Policy: Making the Case for Role Analysis", in Walker (87), 8.

of-influence. The overstated military threat still presents the clearest and easiest avenue for Brazil's military to mobilize popular support for their modernization programs.¹²⁹

A number of scholars over the past decade have predicted increasing possibilities of regional conflict among South American nations. They often point to the Beagle Channel, Falklands/Malvinas war, Antarctica, the New River triangle, northern Chile, and the Gulf of Venezuela as potential strife areas. Several explanations have been presented, all of which have traces of geopolitical theory, and are increasingly applicable to Brazil as it formulates its external strategy in the role of a regional hegemon. Most scholars maintain that population growth, immigration, scarcity of resources, and new technology are making previously vacant territories significantly more important throughout the Southern Cone and stirring up competition among neighboring nations that have only vaguely defined their national borders. The results could be increasingly sharp territorial disputes and a region-wide renewal of national and political inflexibility.¹³⁰

The relationship between the United States and South America is also changing. The most significant change is the

¹²⁹see Margaret G. Herman, "Foreign Policy Role Orientations and the Quality of Foreign Policy Decisions", in Walker (87), 124; also see Robert Harkavy, "The Pariah State Syndrome", Orbis, vol. 21, no. 3, Fall 1977, 623.

¹³⁰see Howard T. Pittman, "Harmony or Discord: The Impact of Democratization on Geopolitics and Conflict in the Southern Cone", in Kelly and Child (88), 30.

world-wide contraction of U.S. power, and its notable preoccupation with the Middle East, representing a new opportunity for independence within the Southern Cone. Most experts would agree that Brazil will play a dominant role in South America, leading into the twenty-first century. Many of those experts, however disagree on the definition of Brazil's national defense strategy.¹³¹ It is the author's opinion that the Brazilian military are positioning themselves to assume a hegemonic role in the Southern Cone, similar to the influence held previously by the United States and the British.

A. BRAZIL'S CHANGING NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY¹³²

Recently, Brazil has experienced a series of economic difficulties: foreign debt, trade deficiencies, slower growth rates, energy scarcities, and demographic imbalances. They seem to have convinced Brazilian political leaders that internal regional development may offer a promising path toward recovery. For this, its leaders apparently believe

¹³¹In numerous interviews with different action officers within the Department of Defense with the author in February 1993; Brazilian defense experts acknowledged Brazil's inherent position within the Southern Cone, but differed significantly when defining Brazil's national defense strategy - most simply stated that one did not exist.

¹³²see Philip Kelly and Jack Child, "Geopolitics, Integration, and Conflict in the Southern Cone and Antarctica", in Kelly and Child (88), 1. The author has drawn heavily from this chapter and is indebted to the previous work of Philip Kelly.

Brazil must integrate its hinterland with its coastal areas, expand trade with Third World countries, and integrate the Amazon basin region (states). Such a policy stresses cooperation within the Southern cone on various projects designed to resolve problems that transcend national borders.¹³³

In the case of Brazil, successful integration requires careful, low-keyed, non-threatening diplomacy. This appears to be precisely the formula used by Brazilian policy-makers during the past few years. Similarly, Brazil intentionally has kept its armed forces relatively small and in low profile. Additionally, Brazil has taken the Third World stand on economic issues and it generally has de-emphasized political matters in preference for cooperative economic ventures with neighboring countries.¹³⁴ Consequently, integrationist approaches, which Brazil seems to have adopted, have laid the foundation for the new era of Brazil as a regional hegemon.

The goal of a hegemon is to extend political and economic influence beyond national borders and to assert regional leadership. Among the many descriptions of Brazil's role in the South American political system, clearly that of a hegemon

¹³³see Kelly and Child (88), 9.

¹³⁴see Wayne A. Selcher, "Brazil and the Southern Cone Subsystem", in G. Pope Atkins (ed), South America into the 1990's: Evolving International Relationships in a New Era, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1990), 87; also see Roett, Orbis, (82), 264.

is not inappropriate. A hegemonic nation can be depicted as a stabilizer, integrator, and leader, rather than as a territorial imperialist. In this context, regional hegemons are characterized by: (1) the strongest military and economic power of an area; (2) the primary designer and enforcer of the political and economic rules of the game as recognized by the region's other members; (3) and the guarantor of territorial integrity and national independence. In these respects a hegemon aims for order, regardless of whether it is oppressive or cooperative in nature.¹³⁵

In the category of military potential, Brazil easily surpasses the other South American states. However, since the turn of the century Brazil has usually maintained a non-belligerent stance towards its neighbors, despite Brazil's significant military potential. Experts have suggested that this low-keyed armed forces presence helps legitimize Brazil's leadership role in the economic and diplomatic areas; a modest defense force poses little threat to neighbors or allies.¹³⁶

In the area of economic potential, Brazil again leads its South American neighbors by a substantial margin in the areas of industry, technology, national resources, transportation, and communications. However, the most convincing example of

¹³⁵see Myers (91), 286.

¹³⁶see Michael G. Manwaring, "Brazilian Military Power: A Capability Analysis", in Wayne A. Selcher (ed), Brazil in the International System: The Rise of a Middle Power, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1985).

Brazil's drive for continental hegemony is seen in its recent moves toward relaxing Southern Cone tensions and cooperating in regional development. Sharply reversing its traditional aloofness toward hemisphere affairs since the 1940's, recently Brazil has initiated a variety of cooperative policies towards its regional neighbors: rapprochement with Argentina; sponsorship of the Amazon Pact, Mercosur and Merconorte; presidential visits; heightened participation in multilateral diplomacy; and joint development projects. Nevertheless, Brazil has assertively used its diplomacy and armed forces against potential subversion along its frontiers or in pressing for settlement of disputes in which it possesses a strong interest. These ventures in leadership, however, are typical of a rising hegemonic state, a position towards which Brazil is steadily moving.

B. BRAZIL'S MILITARY: A STRATEGY DILEMMA

There is a tendency within the Brazilian military to call for increased military spending, with little regard to Brazil's national defense strategy. In fact, there is little debate among both civilian and military leaders concerning that strategy. If the major purpose of Brazil's national strategy is to defend the country by conventional means, then it can be argued that what Brazil's military needs is not more nuclear or space technology, but the appropriate numbers of soldiers and equipment at a higher state of readiness.

For example, a strategy based on a hypothetical threat to the Amazon is one that requires a conventional warfare response. In a defense against foreign intervention in the Amazon region, a few nuclear-powered submarines or ballistic missiles would be virtually insignificant.

If one accepts a conventional defense strategy, the first priority should be personnel - both their quantity and quality (education, training, and individual skills). The second priority should be equipment (boots, guns, tanks, and aircraft). These are not necessarily high-cost items in comparison to the costly research and development programs into high technology weapons systems. In sum, the Brazilian military can achieve the goal of defending its sovereignty through conventional means.

C. CONCLUSION TO BRAZIL'S CHANGING STRATEGY

In most cases, Brazil was quite successful in fulfilling its policy objectives and in not arousing anti-Brazilian sentiments. Although it may be premature to proclaim Brazilian paramouncy in South America, these examples of economic and military power and recent moves toward designing and enforcing a new regional system suggest that such a hegemonic presumption is on the rise. There are ample motivations for Brazil to assume the leadership position with the ending of the bi-polar world.

The government of Brazil spends an inordinate amount of time and thought on worst-case scenarios. This diverts attention away from early action to extreme and unrealistic approaches to problems. Worst-case psychoses can be found in Brazil's military strategy as well, where the most improbable scenarios enjoy a large portion of the resources.

A primary example of worst-case psychosis is Brazil's concept of national defense through nuclear and space technology. In reality, these systems will add very little to the military's overall ability to accomplish their constitutionally directed mission of external defense. Brazil's military strategy in this regard is flawed with an error that could be perpetuated into the next century.

In conclusion, for the present and immediate future Brazil will remain a strong contributor and enforcer of South American stability. Among the Southern Cone countries Brazil has the most to lose from regional strife, a situation that would only damage its international prestige, economic renewal, and internal development of the Amazon. With these strong national interests at stake, Brazil possesses enough incentive to project influence across the region. Its central location, and improving transportation/communication network further enhances these aspirations. South America is no longer under external First World control, which makes it feasible for Brazil to occupy the strategic vacuum that has ensued. Additionally, Brazil's neighbors lack the unity or

political power to form a bloc against Brazilian hegemony, and in most cases the incentives for cooperating with Brazil outweigh any advantages for opposing its hemispheric goals.

Brazil holds an increasing ability to influence policy options throughout the Southern Cone. Brazil's present foreign policies are stabilizing in nature and encourage regional integration, but are based on Brazil's growing hegemonic role. A period of Brazilian hegemony implies the rapid development of interior regions, closer economic integration, and recognition of Brazil as South America's single hegemon.

IX. CONCLUSIONS

This thesis examined a number of factors related to the national defense strategy of Brazil, and its implications for the twenty-first century. These factors include: (1) the impact of earlier geopolitical thinking recast against the aspects of contemporary regional economic integration, in an era of reeling political uncertainties; (2) the military institutions will choose play; and finally (3) Brazil's strategy in developing the Amazon and subsequent aspirations of occupying the position of South America's regional hegemon. In concluding, the thesis will summarize the findings for each issue.

Brazilian geopolitical thinking is an important phenomenon, but one that is little understood outside of the region. Its precepts are closely tied to deep currents of nationalism and patriotism, that have a tendency to endure regardless of regime type. While the original geopolitical focus has changed from an initial emphasis on security to the current emphasis on development and integration, this focus could reverse itself in the future. Behind this development and integration lies the greater vision of the military in transforming Brazil into a major power, and in achieving uncontested regional hegemony.

Brazil is in the final stages of its grand "geopolitical maneuver" in the Amazon. In the near term, however, the sheer magnitude of the domestic social-economic demands have dampened Brazil's bid for uncontested hegemony. Nevertheless, Brazil has viewed South America as a region in which they are destined to exercise the dominant influence.

A critical aspect of Brazil's national defense strategy still not well understood is the tie between the military's missions of nation-building and national security. Given that in past years Brazil's War College enjoyed substantial influence over the country's major economic and political problems, the role of the military was much more clearly defined. Today the influence of the War College in Brazil's strategic planning has waned, with the exception of one issue - the development and integration of the Amazon region. The Amazon is a region that still demands the dual military missions of nation-building and national security, and a region where the military continues to act as the primary force. The successful completion of the integration of the Amazon should release the military from its century-old primary focus of internal security and development to the newer focus on regional hegemony. The remarkable changes in Brazil's civil-military relations have supported and further legitimize the military's role in this move to a primarily external oriented national defense strategy.

The military still has substantial institutional power and will use it to further its vision of Brazil's destiny. As the military nears the completion of its nation-building mission, its internal strategy towards the development of the Amazon will end. When the entire country has been integrated through the geopolitical theories of earlier planners, the strategy will emphasize and focus more attention towards the Caribbean, the South Atlantic, and the Antarctic.

As a result, Brazil's strategic response has been to encourage regional economic integration and regional development under Brazilian leadership. Brazil's political leaders are not against the military's desire for regional hegemony, but openly cannot support such a strategy. The military enjoys virtual autonomy in implementing their strategy. Future Brazilian hegemony implies increased development of the entire Amazon region, closer economic integration, and recognition of Brazil's regional power status.

Brazil is realizing that it cannot attain major power status by the end of the century. As a result, it is seeking broader solutions to internal problems. Brazil recently has opted for greater participation in South American economic integration as indicated by the Amazon basin treaty, Mercosur, and Merconorte. The completion of integration is driven by Brazil's strategic vision and is the next logical step in the military's national strategy towards regional hegemony. In

this context, regional integration is simply one of many necessary steps towards achieving regional hegemony.

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